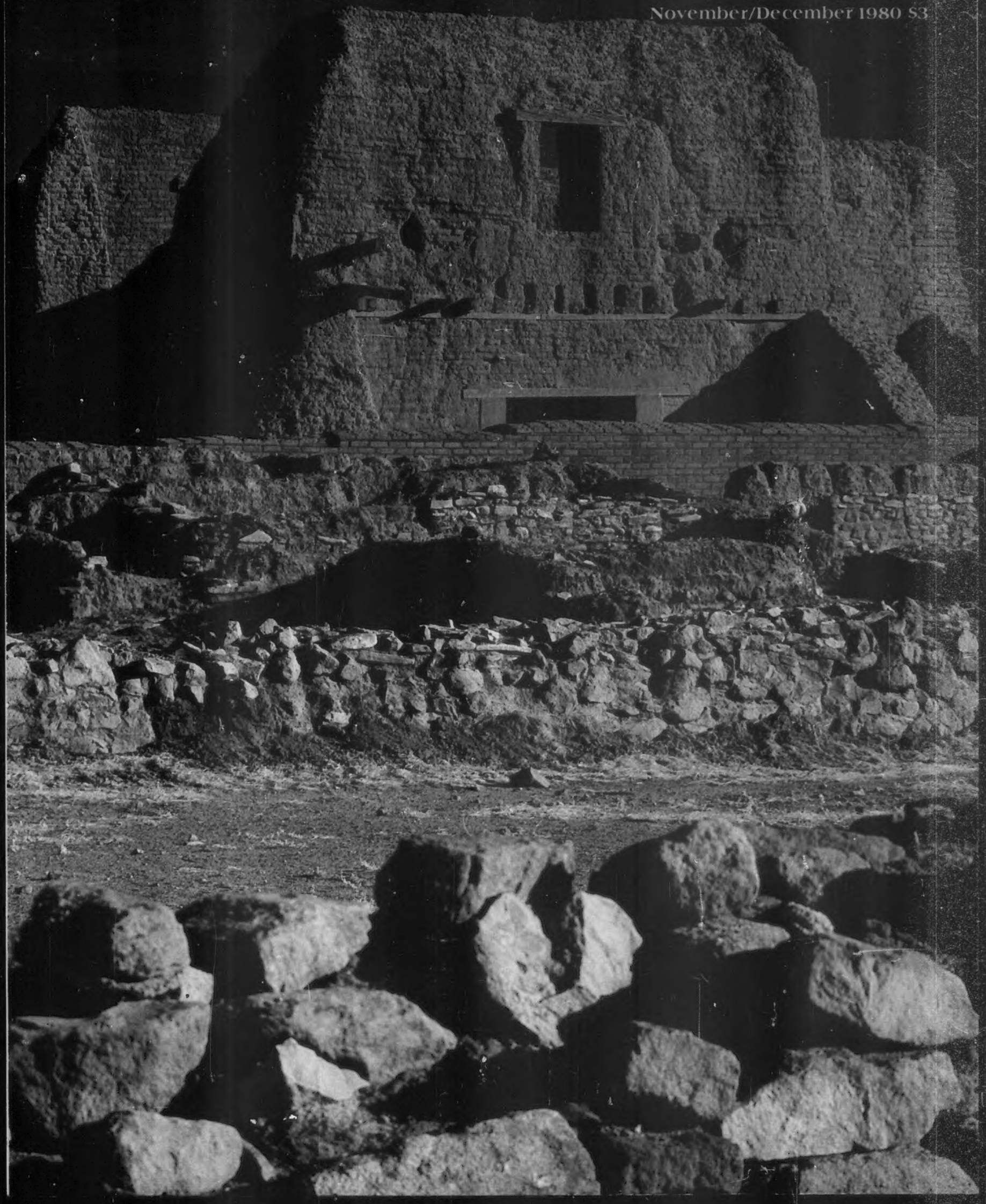
THE AMERICAN WEST

November/December 1980 $3



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Edition of Ten

Ross Stefan
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Oil 36x28

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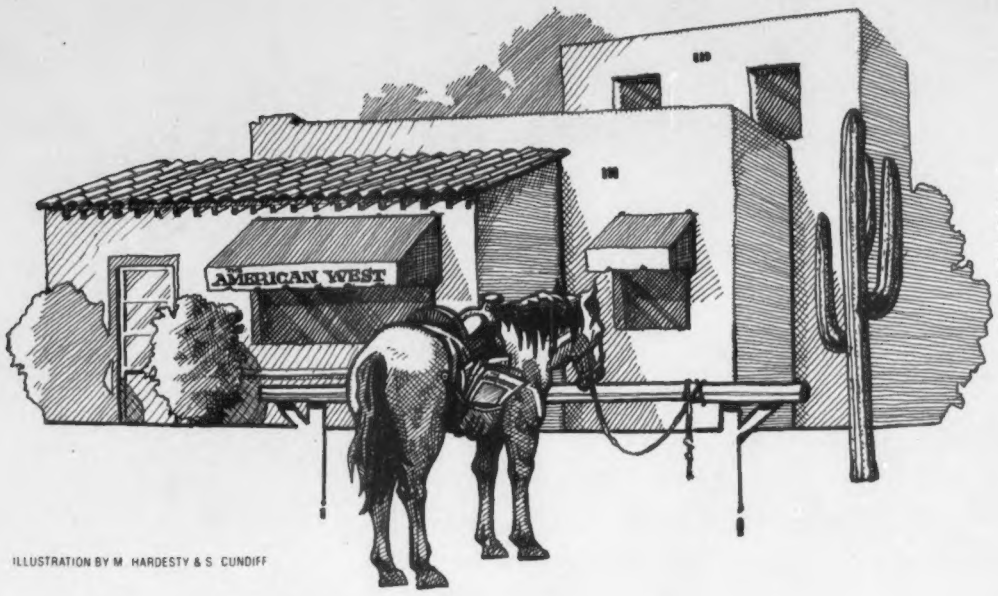


ILLUSTRATION BY M. HARDESTY & S. CUNDIFF

TO: People on our Complimentary List
FROM: Tom Pew

With this issue, THE AMERICAN WEST takes on a new look and 10,000 new subscribers.

Changes Inside

From the first page to the last, we've widened the editorial focus of the magazine and maintained its standards of excellence. As you can see, the cover of THE AMERICAN WEST features a modern photograph of a spectacular adobe ruin—adobe being for us a symbol of the old West and the new. Inside we've added several new departments:

- Gourmet & Grub: To highlight delectable foods with a decidedly western flavor.
- Hidden Inns & Lost Trails: To showcase that unique western hideaway well worth visiting.
- Shelters & Households: To reflect the wonderfully diverse building styles the West calls its own.

Other additions you can count on every issue are: Editor's Notes, Letters to the Editor, Western Lookout, and Western Snapshots.

Reader Response

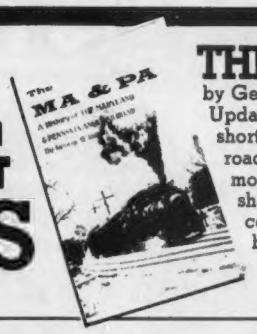
Circulation has expanded, too. Since the July/August issue, THE AMERICAN WEST has gained 10,000 new readers, mostly through mail subscription offers. By the January/February issue, there will be almost 10,000 more, bringing THE AMERICAN WEST's circulation to 40,000. And we don't intend to stop there.

A new media kit is available for advertisers, and soon there will be detailed demographic information on our new readers. By early December the figures from our recent readership survey should be compiled. If you would like to receive the media kit now and/or the readership survey later, just drop me a line.

In the meantime, space reservations for the January/February issue close on November 18. A black-and-white page is still $600, even though the circulation of THE AMERICAN WEST has almost doubled.

Enough said. Enjoy THE AMERICAN WEST and let me hear your comments.

FOR A CLASSIC RAILROADING CHRISTMAS



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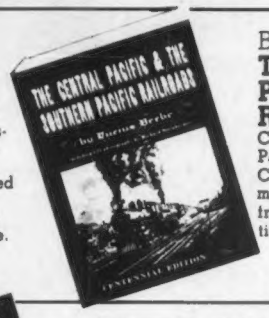

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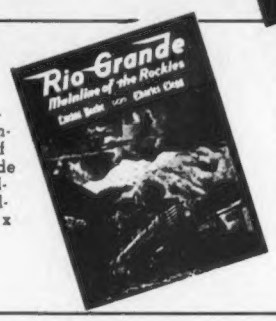

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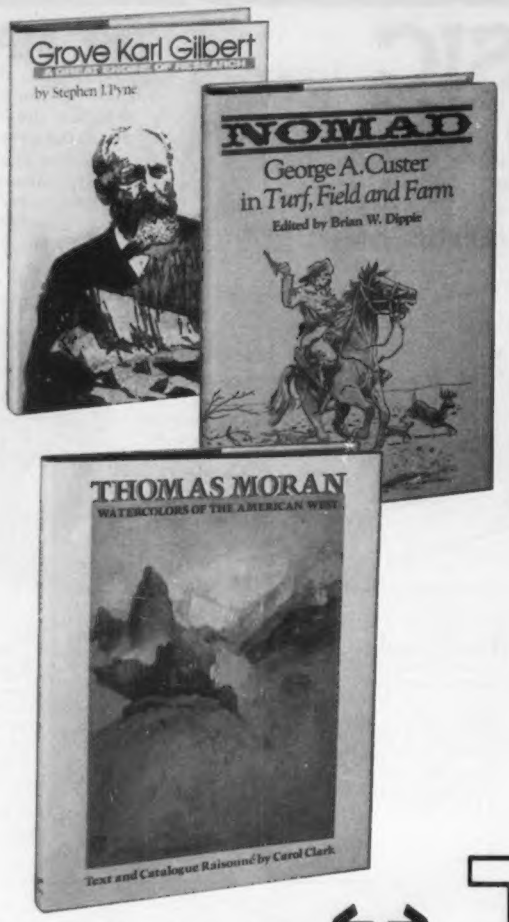

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THE
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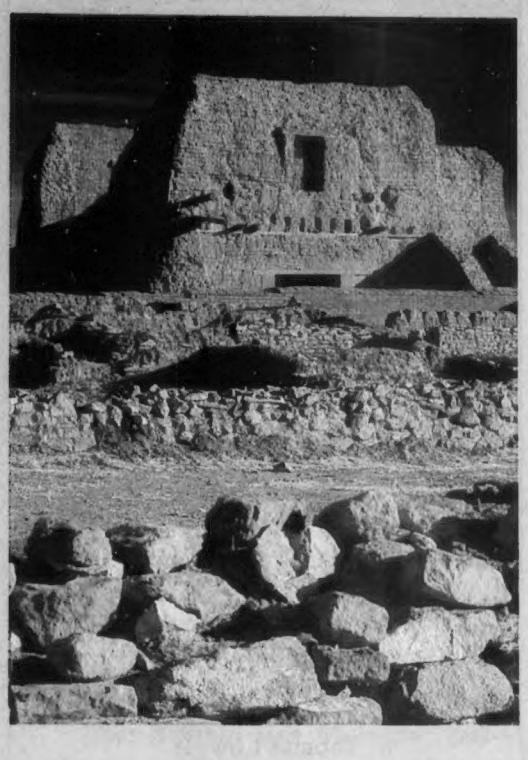
November/December 1980
Volume XVII, Number 6

Cover Photograph



Ruins of Pecos Church
by David Muench

Here the lens of David Muench captures the rich color and varied texture of adobe, ancient building block of the Pecos Indians. Taken at Pecos National Monument about twenty-five miles southeast of Santa Fe, this photograph offers a unique perspective on the Pecos mission, its outlying walls, and the ruins of a once monumental pueblo. Focus rests on the massive remains of the seventeenth-century mission of Nuestra Señora de Porciúncula, built under the direction of Fray Andrés Juárez with more than two thousand adobe bricks. Shadows darken the sides of the fortress-like church, destroyed during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and now open to the gaze of bright blue sky. Muench's photograph also suggests the size and grandeur of the ancient Pecos pueblo, a teeming community of several thousand in Coronado's time. Long before the arrival of missioner Juárez, the great, multistoried dwellings of the Pecos Indians rose from the land. Today the ruins of the pueblo testify to the industry and imagination of its builders. For a look at other adobe masterpieces, turn to page 42.

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Editor's Notes

With this issue of THE AMERICAN WEST we're introducing three new regular features and updating another.

SHELTERS AND HOUSEHOLDS will cover the full range of western architecture, its evolution up to today, with some glimpses into its energy-, space-, and water- conscious future.

We aim to provide our readers with practical information as well as food for their imagination on unique, comfortable—and sometimes improbable—western adaptations to lifestyle needs of the many diverse regions of the West.

From time to time SHELTERS AND HOUSEHOLDS will concentrate on an in-depth look at a particular dwelling. The particular dwelling might be a Navajo hogan in northern New Mexico, or it might be a traditional ranch house on one of the turn-of-the-century homesteads on the northern plains of Montana or Wyoming.

The feature will offer ideas, drawings, and photographs. For a firsthand look at what we're talking about we're happy to have Jim Maurer's cogent article and David Muench's beautiful photographs on adobe buildings in this issue.

GOURMET AND GRUB, another new feature, as its name implies will deal with food, and since we and our readers relish good food as much as we appreciate beautiful and practical architecture we'll explore western cooking from chuck wagon and trail food to the haute cuisine of some old French and Chinese restaurants we know of in the West.

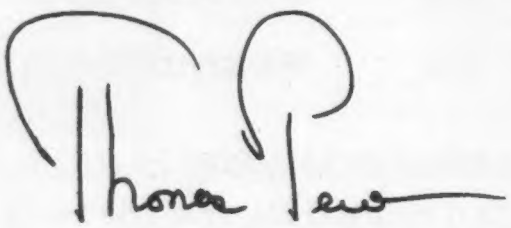
As in the case of our shelter section we plan to offer our readers practical information on preparing the dishes we feature and on sources of special ingredients that are called for in some of the more unusual recipes we offer.

This month's GOURMET AND GRUB is definitely of the grub variety. If you haven't made and tasted home-cooked jerky you probably don't even know what jerky should taste like, how delicious it can be. We'd never venture out on the trail without a packet of home-cooked jerky. We suggest that you turn the pages to consult our recipe and a few illustrations of how it's done.

Our third new feature introduced in this issue, HIDDEN INNS AND LOST TRAILS, takes our readers to special places where the location and atmosphere of the place offer an immediate experience of the West—what is as well as what was.

In the meantime our assistant editor Nancy Bell Rollings has taken WESTERN HISTORY TODAY, renamed it WESTERN LOOKOUT, and given it a new direction. Our idea here is to offer you not just a calendar of openings, events, and announcements, but to offer an opinion on the best of these, plus a smattering of unusual or unique happenings in the West.

And finally, with all of this change, a word to our longtime faithful readers. The addition of all of the above does not mean the elimination of the beautiful articles THE AMERICAN WEST has always had on western painters, photographers, and individuals of historical significance. We're adding to, not taking away from, THE AMERICAN WEST.



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Letters

THE AMERICAN WEST
is published by the
BUFFALO BILL
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Cody, Wyoming

THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER is a non-profit institution dedicated to preserving and exhibiting the heritage of the American West. It is also home of four major museums whose exhibits of art, ethnographic materials, and historic artifacts reflect more than one hundred years of America's colorful past. Together the museums at the Center offer an extensive view of frontier life.

The Buffalo Bill Museum, dedicated in 1927, holds the largest collection of Buffalo Bill material in the world. The Whitney Gallery of Western Art, begun in 1959, features masterworks of American painting and sculpture. The Plains Indian Museum, opened in 1969, brings to life the rich traditions of Native Americans in the West. And the Winchester Museum, whose permanent exhibit hall was completed in 1980, records the history of American firearms through the magnificent gun collection Oliver Winchester began in 1860.

Membership in the Center's Patrons' Association is open to anyone interested in America's western heritage. Annual membership includes subscriptions to THE AMERICAN WEST published six times a year and a quarterly newsletter, free museum admission, and discounts on museum publications. Categories are: Individual—$25, Family—$50, Sponsor—$100, Sustaining—$500, and Benefactor—$1,000. Donations are tax deductible and should be sent to Box 1020, Cody, Wyoming 82414.

Dear Sir:

I am a subscriber to, and enjoy reading, THE AMERICAN WEST. The July/August issue contained an article entitled "Sam Houston," which I enjoyed reading for the most part. However, it contained several inserts which in my opinion did not belong in and detracted from the article. For example, on page 12, "a fine paper then, a superior one today" (referring to the *Arkansas Gazette*), and at the top of the page, "or later, to a Japanese or a Nicaraguan or a Vietnamese." And at the bottom of page 65, "But Texas was hell-bent on destruction along with the other secessionists." These, and similar remarks leave me a little cold to an article that I otherwise enjoyed....

Sincerely yours,
Walter S. Knudsen, Jr.
Lakewood, Colo.

Dear Editor:

I so enjoyed the article on Sam Houston by Joe B. Frantz. In the painting reproduction on page 9, it would appear that Houston was in full dinner dress even to the white waistcoat and black tie. But that is only nit-picking!

There were many Missourians in Houston's small army.... Stephen Austin also referred to himself as a Missourian....

Sincerely,
Lew Larkin
Kansas City, Mo.

Gentlemen:

I received your trial copy [July/August] of THE AMERICAN WEST magazine and must be brutally frank. All whip cream (glossy cover, fine paper, etc.) and no meat and potatoes (interesting articles and pictures of the West). A fine collection of paintings of the West which does not turn me on....

Please no more future copies. You can save your money as I would not consider a subscription at any price.

Sincerely,
Henry L. Foerster
Sheboygan, Wis.

Sir:

What are you doing to THE AMERICAN WEST? I have noted with disapproval the inclusion of editorials, letters to the editor and advertisements in the anterior portion of the magazine.... Too much space is now being devoted to the artists and other visual recorders of the old West. How about more for the doers, not the observers?

Sincerely,
Barry A. Swackhamer
San Jose, Calif.

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed is my check for a two years renewal to THE AMERICAN WEST. Also enclosed is my check for ten copies of the current [Sep/Oct] issue. Your article about my grandfather, William Henry Jackson, is one of the very best I have ever read....

William H. Jackson, Sr.
Reno, Nevada

Dear Folks:

We have just finished reading the July/August issue of THE AMERICAN WEST and wish to commend all of you who have had a part in putting it together. The articles, stories, etc., are excellent. And let us add a word for the printers—the color work, layouts, etc....

Sincerely,
Walter C. Giersbach
Cherry Hill, N.J.

THE AMERICAN WEST welcomes relevant letters from its readers. We will endeavor to print a cross section of those we receive. Please address: Letters to the Editor, THE AMERICAN WEST, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

Western Lookout

Kentucky. Mammoth Cave National Park has been selected for possible nomination to the World Heritage List by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Mammoth Cave's 215 miles of underground passages make it the most extensive cave system in the world. Additions to the World Heritage List of internationally valued properties are determined by a twenty-one nation committee of the United Nations.

Wyoming. Old western movie posters are on exhibit at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody. Showing through November 30, the posters and related graphics belong to Don Look, a westerner whose poster roundup began when he was a child. If you've forgotten Allan Lane as Red Ryder in *Stagecoach to Denver*, this exhibit may bring it all back.

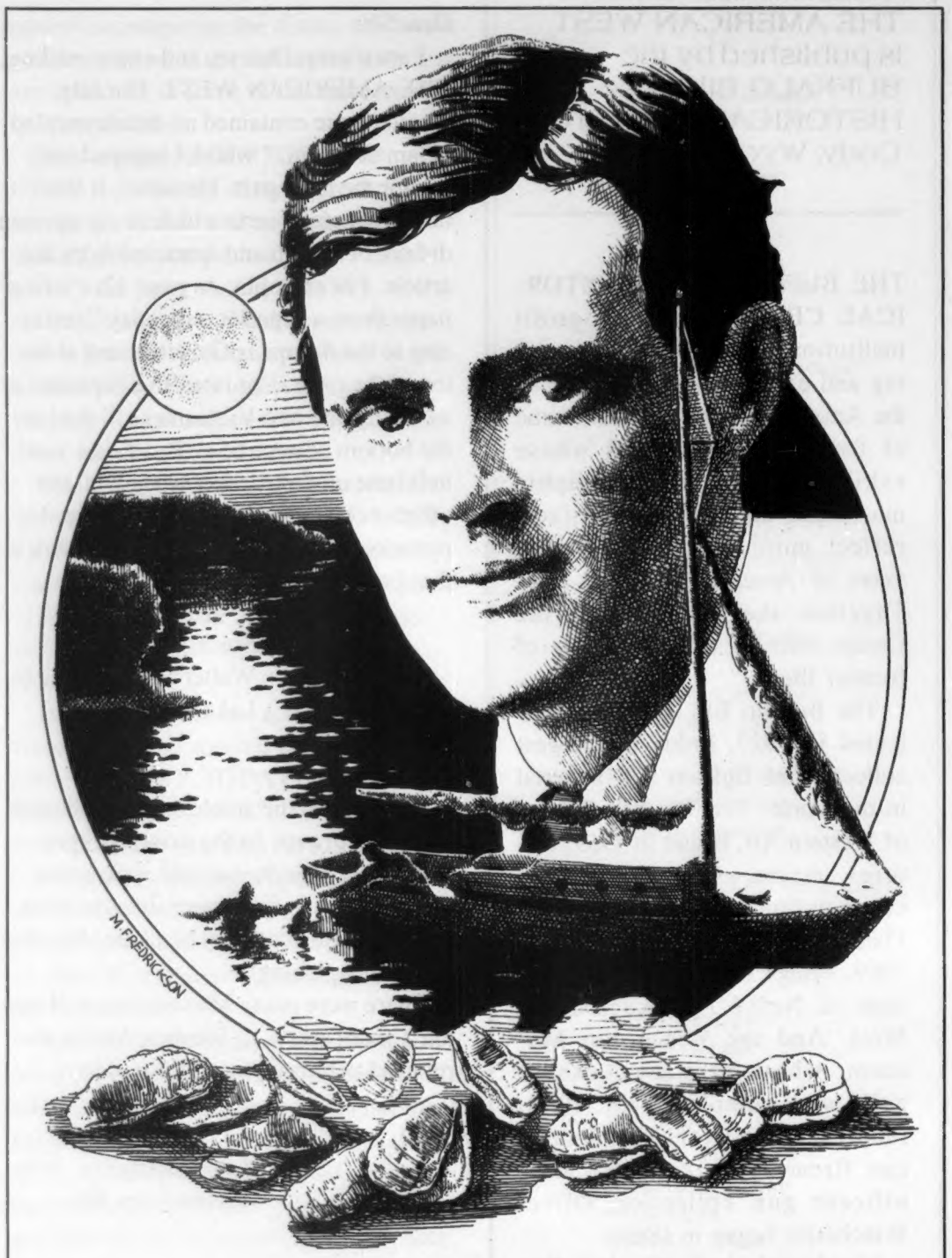
Colorado. December 6 marks the eightieth birthday of the Denver Museum of Natural History in City Park. A party with games, dancing, and a birthday cake is planned. Founded in 1900, the museum is in the midst of a $3.1 million capital campaign. Over $2 million have been raised already—another cause for celebration.

Oregon. In commemoration of the 175th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark expedition, a quarter-mile nature trail is being built in Oregon's Lewis & Clark State Park. The trail will be lined with prized specimens of the kinds of trees, shrubs, and flowers discovered and written about during the explorers' famed journey.

Bryce Canyon, Utah. With the rise in foreign visitors to American National Parks, tour guides are finding *bonjour* to be as helpful as "howdy." Bilingual guides have been hired, signs posted in French, and the park restaurant's menu re-evaluated with foreign appetites in mind. The reason for this influx? According to one park official, it is the rise of the franc and simple eagerness to see the beauty of America.

Mexico. Thanks to the preservation techniques of modern science, the skull and bones of Jesuit frontiersman Father Kino (1644–1711) received restorative work just before the annual October pilgrimage to his shrine in Magdalena. The remains of this pioneer priest (founder of missions stretching from Sonora through the American Southwest) were returned by police escort after chemical treatment in Mexico City. Honoring Kino on the Feast Day of Saint Francis of Assisi is a tradition over one hundred fifty years old.

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK A. FREDRICKSON



Jack London: The Pardoned Pirate

The adventures of writer Jack London (1876–1916) came to an end sixty-four years ago, but a moot trial in the San Francisco Court of Historical Review brought the teenage London with a taste for oysters very much to life. On July 17, members of the San Francisco Boosters testified that the young London stole oysters from local fisheries by night to sell to San Francisco restaurants by day. This illegal response to the call of the wild had been left off the record, the Boosters claimed. (They have been boosting interest in San Francisco history since 1970.)

The London legend, however, will live on without a smirch. The "trial" ended when Superior Judge Harry W. Low ruled that "London contributed far more to the Bay Area than he ever stole from the Bay." London's adventures as an oyster pirate began as an escape from a low-paying job at Hickmott's Cannery where he stuffed pickles into jars eighteen hours a day. They ended months later when London volunteered to catch the oyster thieves instead. Juvenile delinquence led to literature in London's story *A Raid on the Oyster Pirates*.

Oklahoma. Two Oklahoma drug stores have won recognition in the National Register of Historic Places. Tuton's Drug Store (1917) in Arcadia is noted for its sandstone exterior and arches. Engels's Drug Store (1902) in Luther stands in near-original condition. Owned by descendants of the first proprietor, Engels's still sells soda pop and ice cream.

California. Early settlers on the western plains used gopherweed seeds to brew a bitter coffee. Now scientists are using the sap of this desert plant to produce "gopheroil"—a high-quality crude oil which can be refined into gasoline. According to Melvin Calvin, a Nobel-laureate chemist at the University of California at Berkeley, the U.S. could produce two million barrels of gopheroil a day by 1995, or about 10% of U.S. oil needs. Calvin recently received $250,000 from the Energy Department to research gopherweed, the amazing five-foot-high cousin of the rubber tree.

Arkansas. For most people, Santa Claus travels by sled and reindeer, but not for the people of Hot Springs. There, on December 7, Santa will board a decorated barge for a trip across Lake Hamilton. The Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism thinks he will stop at several marinas along the way.

Lincoln, Nebraska. A large collection of western art, valued at $2.5 million, has recently been donated to the Center for Great Plains Studies at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. The collection includes sculpture, paintings, prints, and drawings by well-known western artists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Las Vegas. Once again things will be heating up at the Circus Circus Hotel as it hosts hundreds of cooks in the Nevada State Chili Cookoff December 12 through 14. Gaily decorated cooking booths will be used for the competition, and musical encouragement will come from an outdoor stage. A prize-winning chili recipe can bring its creator trophies, trips, and cash.

Tucson. A new exhibit at the Tucson Museum of Art records the impact of Arizona on artists and photographers visiting the Grand Canyon State over the last 150 years. "Visitors to Arizona: 1846 to the Present" includes works by artists as different in period and technique as Frederic Remington and Helen Frankenthaler. The exhibit will run through November 30.

Yukon. The Sluice Box Lounge in the territorial town of Dawson City may have one less drink to serve thirsty miners. The champagne "sourtoe" cocktail has had 725 takers in eight years despite the pickled appendage floating on its surface. But big toes are hard to come by now. Last spring someone swallowed the "sourtoe" whole, and now undertakers are reluctant to supply the Sluice Box with its favorite gruesome ingredient. Tourists in the area beware: there's a market for frostbitten toes.

Washington, D.C. The role of pioneer photographers in shaping eastern America's image of the West is revealed in the exhibit "Western Views, Eastern Visions" at the Smithsonian's National Museum of History and Technology. The 170 photographs in the show include works never exhibited before from the U.S. Geological Survey Archives, works which triggered the mapping of the West. At the end of January, the show will leave Washington as part of the Smithsonian's Traveling Exhibition Service.

Fort Worth. Another work by frontier artist John Mix Stanley, "Oregon City on the Willamette River," now hangs in the Amon Carter Museum. The newly acquired painting dates to 1852 and depicts a small community in the Oregon Territory south of present-day Vancouver. "In this beautifully painted, quiet, idyllic townscape, Stanley presents a moment of conflict and change in the Oregon Territory," says curator Carol Clark.

Oklahoma City. The top cowboys and cowgirls in the country will gather here December 6 to 14 for the biggest rodeo of them all: the National Finals of the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association). For seventeen years Oklahoma City has hosted this event which includes the annual crowning of Miss Rodeo America. State rodeo queens compete for this prize which must go to a good rider as well as a pretty girl.

Los Angeles. In 1944 DeDe Johnson designed the first pedal-pusher suit. This costume and forty-two others which made fashion history are on exhibit at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art through December 14, as part of the city's bicentennial celebration. Assembled by the museum's textiles and costumes department, "Salute to California: Fifty Years of Fashion, 1930–1980" displays everything from the broomstick-pleated skirt of the 1940s to evening gowns by contemporary California designers. L.A. should kick up her elegant heels at this celebration of her bicentennial.

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ILLUSTRATION BY MARK A. FREDRICKSON

A nutritious food from ancient times, jerky can be pounded into fragments for easier eating.

The best and tastiest pack food ever:

JERKY

by Laura N. Pew

The Spaniards called it *charqui*; we call it jerky. It is meat preserved by one of the simplest and oldest processes known to man. The flesh of game or domesticated animals is sliced thin and hung in the open air until dry, and in this state it will last for years—with the added benefit of a dramatic decrease in weight. These qualities made jerky as valuable to ancient travelers and armies on the march as it is to backpackers today. It was used in Sumerian cities, sold in markets along the ancient Mediterranean trade routes, and carried by the Huns. Drying racks dated at about 3500 B.C. have been found in upper New York state.

The earliest Asiatic tribes migrating across the Bering Strait about 5,000 years ago probably brought with them the knowledge of preserving foods by drying, and the techniques have remained remarkably similar all over the North American continent. Although dried meats were used by the ancient Basque and French races, European explorers in America apparently learned the process from the Indians. The Spanish *charqui* and our word "jerky" are phonetic interpretations of an Indian word, and although food writers often avoid the folksy sounding "jerky" in favor of "jerked beef," there is of course no etymological connection between the two.

The North American Indians used all kinds of game to make their jerky, but the primary source was bison. Edward Wentworth, who researched the subject in detail for his January, 1956, article in *Agricultural History*, says that even today bison produces the best-flavored jerky. Salmon was also used extensively, from the west coast to the Sierra. Processing was easy: meat was cut into long strips and hung outside for a day or two until dry and hard. Some tribes hastened the process by hanging the strips inside a lodge near a smoking fire.

The meat was usually dried very hard, then pounded into fragments for easier storage and eating. It was either kept as jerky or converted into pemmican by adding fat and crushed cherries or berries. Pemmican is an extremely valuable survival food with its high protein, iron, and vitamin content (the last due partly to the cherries) and its high caloric value. Though it sounds greasy and unappetizing (usually between sixty and eighty percent fat), many explorers have praised not only its practical value but its taste as well, which evidently becomes ever more appealing after weeks or months of subsisting on it. After Admiral Peary lived on pemmican for months during one of his polar trips, he called it the most satisfying food he knew. The expedition members who had brought along a treat or two (such as a piece of fruitcake) said that they would gladly have exchanged them for another bite of pemmican.

It is foreign to our modern American taste to use a food made entirely of beef and fat, even for the duration of a short backpacking trip. Jerky is ideal, however—lightweight and superior in taste and nutritive value to the packaged and freeze-dried foods currently on the market. But beware of packaged jerky, with its rubbery consistency and distasteful, unnatural additives (everything from MSG to nitrites, and usually a little sugar as well).

Jerky is one of the easiest foods to prepare. In fact, only fresh meat and fresh air are required. For those who like to satisfy the taste buds as well as the stomach, a little imagination and some standard kitchen ingredients can impart a marvelous range of flavors. Just follow three cardinal rules:

1. Trim all fat from the meat (and skin from fowl or fish), and do not use oils or fats in seasoning. These hinder drying and may cause a rancid taste.
2. Dissolve seasoning in some liquid. If food is rubbed (rather than soaked) with salt, it will become excessively tough.
3. Pork and game must be steamed first to kill any parasites.

The following recipes can be made with chicken or any reasonably tender cut of beef. I like them best with beef and find flank steak the easiest cut to work with. If you slice the meat with the grain into thin strips, this will produce the smoothest, flattest strips of jerky, but slicing across the grain results in a much more tender product. When the meat from several large animals was dried at one time, it was necessary to cut along the fibers so that the very long strips would not fall apart while hanging in the wind. However, this is not a problem with the small quantities used in one's kitchen.

Jerky

Cut 1 flank steak (usually about 1 1/4 lbs.) into very thin strips, cutting against the grain.
Marinate for 2 hrs. or more.
Spread on racks set on cookie sheets. Heat in oven at 150°–170° overnight.
Let cool. Pack in airtight plastic bags.

Marinades

Oriental: 1/2 c. water
1/3 c. soy sauce
1 split garlic clove
1 tsp. ginger

Herbed: 1/2 c. water
1/4 c. red wine
1/2 med. onion, sliced
2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
1 tsp. oregano
1/2 tsp. basil
1/2 tsp. marjoram

Curried: 1/2 c. water
1/4 c. lemon juice
2 tsp. curry powder
1 tsp. coriander
1 tsp. cumin
1 tsp. ginger
1 tsp. salt

SOURCES:
Waverly Root and Richard de Rochemont, *Eating in America: A History* (1976). Edward N. Wentworth, "Dried Meat—Early Man's Travel Ration" in *Agricultural History*, January, 1956.

Laura N. Pew is the restaurant reviewer for the Tucson Citizen.

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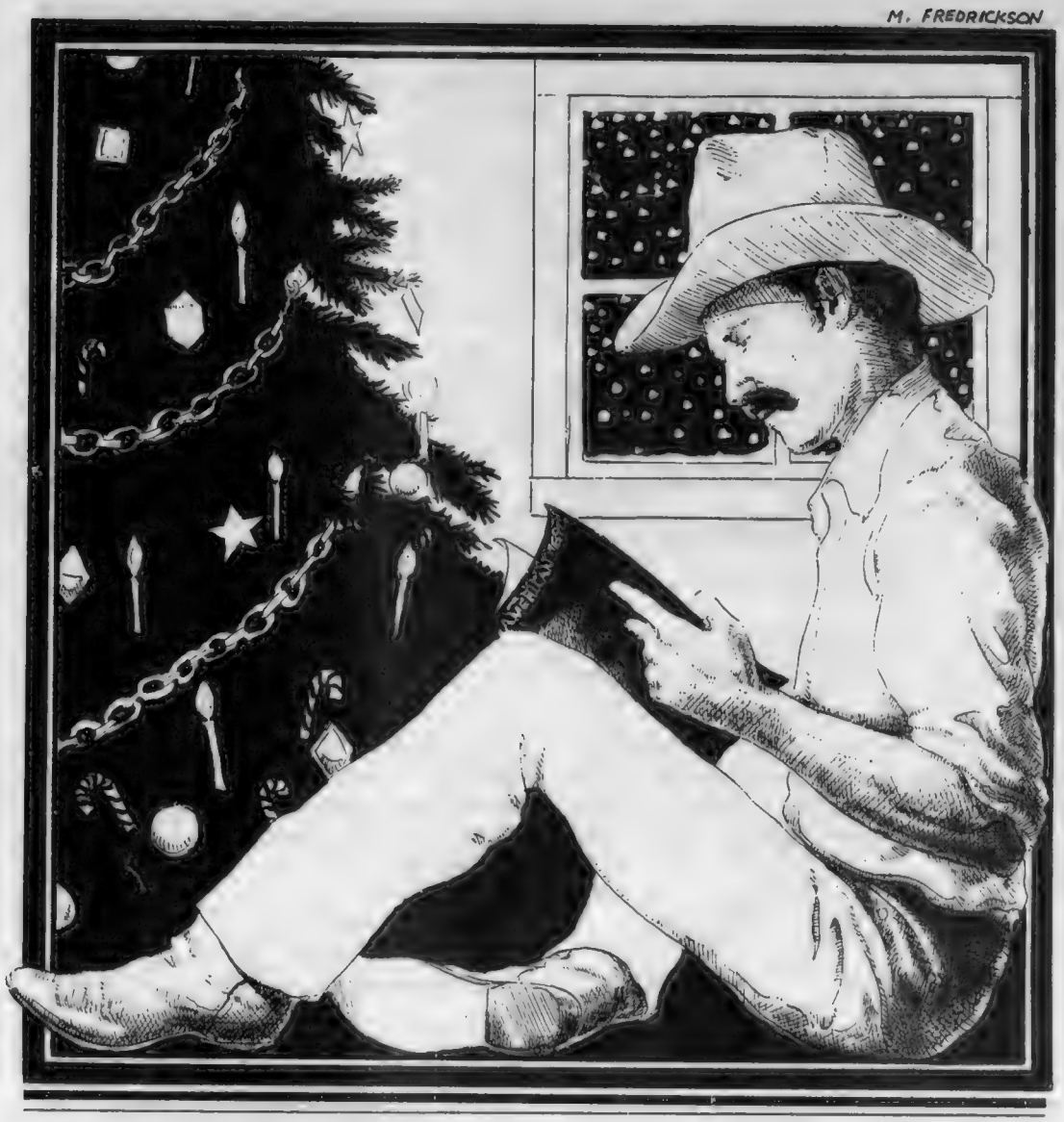

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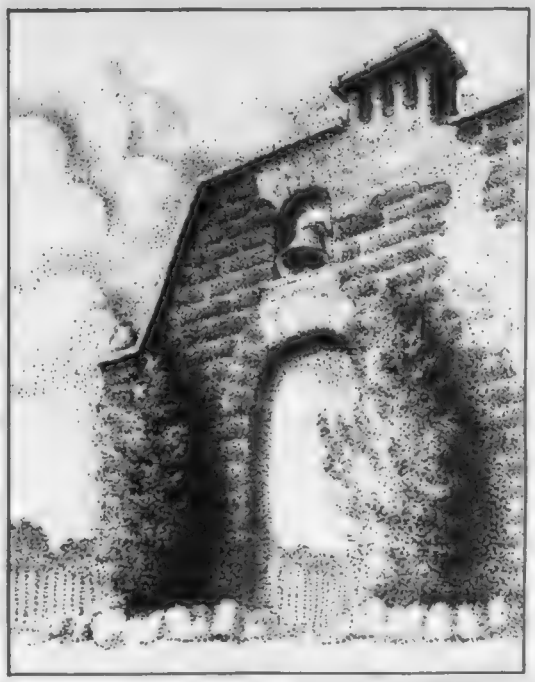

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK A. FREDRICKSON

Arizona Retreat: Rex Ranch

by Karen Thure

Historic Rex Ranch is hilly and verdant on an elevated strip of grassland that served as the cradle of modern Arizona society.

In the Santa Cruz valley south of Tucson, Rex Ranch is almost as isolated now as it was in the days when it was surrounded by vast Spanish land grants. The fifty-acre dude operation lies in the middle of a 4,000-acre working cattle ranch; on the east the spread borders woodsy Madera Canyon in the Coronado National Forest, a former stopping place for Cochise's band of raiders. Apaches probably attacked the Rex—they certainly did repeatedly pillage every other homestead in the valley.

An atmosphere of history, an evocation of the past—this is the most distinctive quality of the Rex. Prehistoric Hohokam Indians settled in this area to enjoy its advantages for agriculture. Later, Pima and Papago families hiked to this grassy river valley to harvest bitter acorns from the live oaks. Some of these good-natured natives eventually settled in the acorn country to help the redoubtable Padre Kino build a mission called Tumacacori. Their descendants raised the ambitious adobe-domed structure that is a well-kept national monument today.

You will definitely want to take in Tumacacori during your visit to the Rex Ranch, as well as its attendant fortress Tubac, a few miles up the road. The old military post is now a state park with a visitor center that displays the results of recent archaeological sifting. It is hard to believe that this backwater presidio was once a throbbing center of colonization, the mother city from which the Spaniards settled both Tucson and San Francisco.

Strolling through the Rex's mesquite-shaded patios, you find it easy to drum up visions of the place's colorful past. Surely it is one of the few dude outfits that can put you up in a room that is more than 140 years old. Some of the rooms go back to the days before the Gadsden Purchase when the Santa Cruz valley was part of Mexico.

Rex Ranch has its own display of relics in the spacious recreation room. Hohokam pots date back as far as A.D. 900. Old quirts, spurs, and miners' candles remind you of the valley's boom days when nearby Tubac published Arizona's first newspaper and well-known capitalists employed hundreds of Mexicans and Indians in rich silver mines. Smaller-scale prospectors built a smelter in the center of Rex Ranch; you can see its ruins on one of the regular, dude trail rides.

The Rex's rooms and suites are of thick, natural adobe with distinctive touches of southwestern architecture. Every room is different in both layout and furnishings. Recently redecorated in subtle, earthen tones, accommodations are simple and homey.

One special dude activity is a pack trip into the foothills, complete with steak fry and camp-out under the stars. In spring, summer, and fall, this experience can be delightful, but winter nights can bring a damp, penetrating frost. Splendid daytime weather dominates from November through April, although during December, January, and February, wet snows or chilly rains may come. Seasonal rains fall in summer, too, mainly in July and August. Then the humid air in the elevated valley—cooler than the desert's but still mighty sultry—feels like warm wet wool against your sweating skin.

Besides a swimming pool and stables, Rex Ranch offers an old-fashioned croquet lawn, a western library, golf at the Tubac Country Club, and station-wagon trips to Tombstone, Tumacacori, and Tubac, as well as to Nogales, Mexico.

Limited to thirty guests, the ranch operates on the American plan, with one daily rate covering all activities, room, and meals. The latter are gourmet rather than traditionally western and are served family style in a gracious dining room.

Unpretentious is the word for the Rex. And you have to go in for dude delights like riding and singing around the campfire to make a visit worth your while. If you do like these western pleasures, though, this isolated, historical ranch will provide a special get-away, a quiet place that's far removed from the disturbing pressures of modern life. It offers no midnight room service or big-name entertainment, but in this age of over-priced, plasticized hotels, the honest comforts of Rex Ranch might prove refreshing indeed.

Rex Ranch is about forty miles south of Tucson via Interstate 19. For information, write to Gene Bodeen, Rex Ranch, Box 87, Amado, Arizona 85640 or call collect (602) 398-2311.

Karen Thure is a free-lance writer in Tucson. Her work appears regularly in Arizona Highways *and the* Smithsonian.

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Portrait for a Western Album

Sid Wilson: Rode with Buffalo Bill and still riding

by Carol Ann Bassett

In 1916 Sid Wilson demonstrated the vigorous kind of bronc riding (below) which had won him a place in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Today at 101 years (right), Wilson keeps busy on his ranch at Tombstone.

COURTESY OF SID WILSON

SPARKS FLEW AS SID WILSON'S CREASED and weathered hands moved a piece of metal over a grinding wheel. "Mighty cold wind blowin' today," he said, looking up from his work. At the age of 101, Sid Wilson of Tombstone, Arizona, has seen and done just about everything connected with ranching and riding, from breaking broncs to traveling around the world with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

Sid Wilson was born August 21, 1879, in Tom Green County, Texas. Before he was two, his father sold the ranch and moved his family to Montana. Wilson had his only education at an Indian reservation school. "Three months of schoolin' was all I ever had," he said.

When Wilson was twelve, he yielded to youthful ambition and decided to move on. One day his mother sent him to the store to buy some clothesline wire. He saddled up his horse, bypassed the store, and headed northeast toward Canada where he found work on a ranch near the Little Missouri River. "I just made a living any way I could. I grew up on ranches. It was only two or three times I ever had anything to do with the city, and not very long at that."

In 1898 Wilson stepped off a stagecoach on the dusty wooden sidewalks of Tombstone in front of the OK Corral. He had come to town to break horses for John Slaughter, former sheriff of Cochise County and a big rancher in the area. "Slaughter brought me here to break horses for the Spanish-American War. I'd ride 'em out and gentle 'em down. I worked on and off for Slaughter if he had a bunch of horses to break."

As a young man, Wilson heard stories about Buffalo Bill Cody, one of the earliest superstars of the American West, and in 1900 Wilson joined Buffalo Bill's famous Wild West Show as a bronc rider. Usually, cowboys had to qualify for the show by riding a wild horse, but Wilson says that he got the job through recommendations from ranchers who had employed him.

Wilson performed with Buffalo Bill's show for seven seasons, traveling around the world three and one-half times. He did more than bronc riding. As he explained it: "When they weren't performing in the show, most of the cowboys were either drunk or in jail. You had to be flexible to fill in the empty spaces for anyone who didn't show up. Cody didn't ask for volunteers. When he said, 'Get on and ride,' you did it."

During his travels with the show, Wilson was not impressed by glamorous entertainments. His favorite places were Belgium because he admired the people there and Outer Mongolia because he enjoyed its untamed wilderness.

In 1911 Wilson returned to his Tombstone ranch, "Pick 'Em Up." Surrounded by mementoes of a long and colorful life, Wilson still builds stagecoaches and wagons there. "If it wasn't for this highway, I'd be satisfied here. Since they paved it, there's been too many drivers."

When asked how the West has changed since he was a boy, Wilson replied with a troubled expression: "The West has changed in every way that's imaginable. The sun and moon comes up the same—and that's about it."

Carol Ann Bassett *is a free-lance writer in Tucson.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID LEE GUSS

Boley, Oklahoma

Trial in American Apartheid

by Thomas W. Pew, Jr.

Since the interviews for this article were completed, we have learned of the deaths of two elderly Boley citizens who contributed information: Joseph Langston McCormick, Sr., and Maggie-Marie MacMullen.–Editor.

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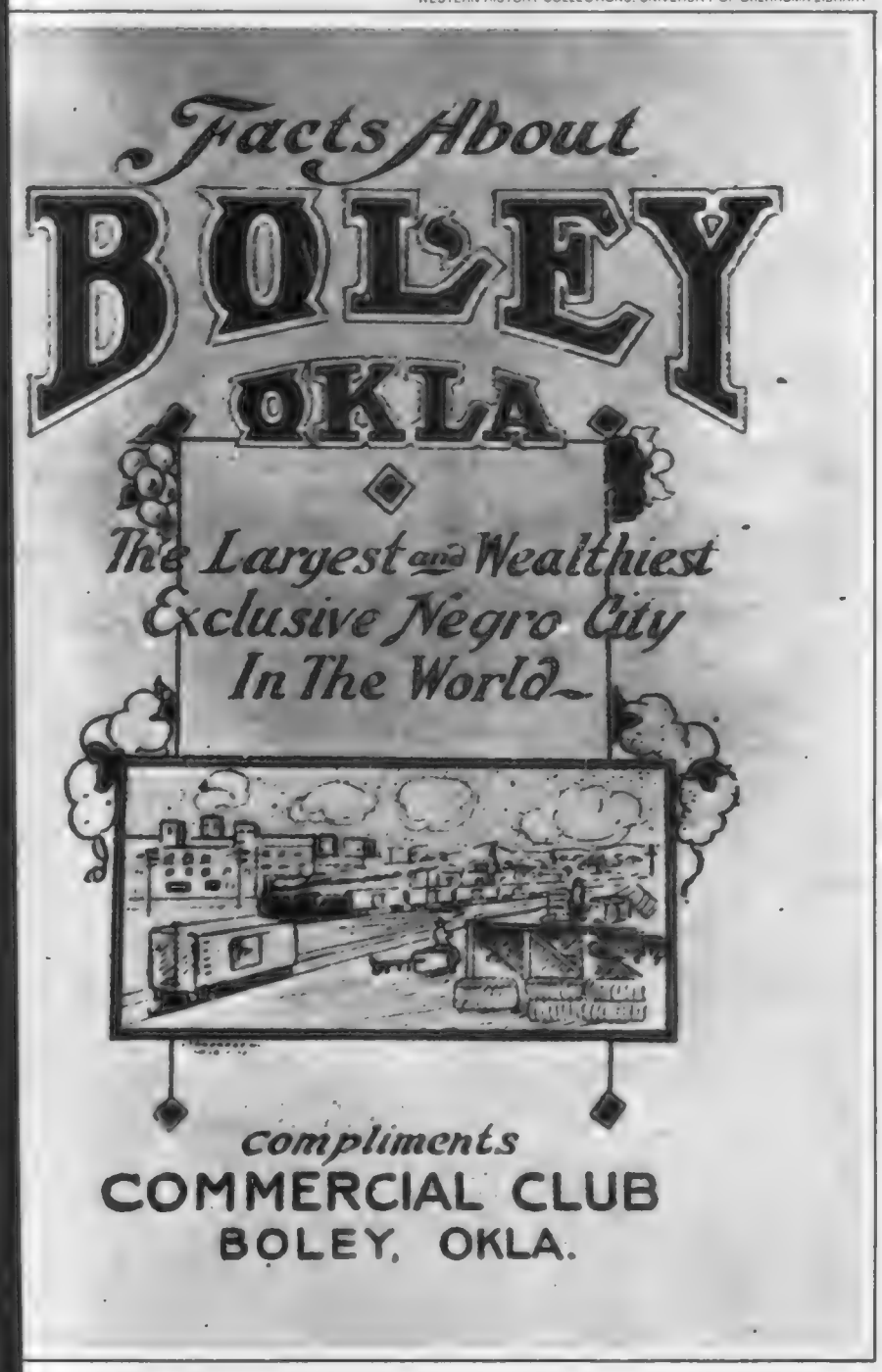

EXODUS ADAMS came first. He came before the tangle of blackjack and post oak was cleared and the fields brought under the plow. He came before the town, before the railroad, before the cotton gin. He was on the land among the Creek Indians before Oklahoma statehood, before Jim Crow laws, and before Okfuskee County's first lynching (Laura Nelson and her thirteen-year-old son from the center span at Yarborough's Crossing on the Northern Canadian River in 1911). Exodus came before all this and he survived; at eighty-seven Exodus Adams still follows the plow into his fields behind a high-rumped span of work horses.

Joseph Langston McCormick was just an infant in arms when his recently widowed father bundled him and his nine siblings onto the west-bound train and, with twenty-one dollars in his pocket, quit Alabama for good. The elder McCormick, whose father was born a slave—son of an Irish master and slave mother, had lived enough of the black man's new freedom in the deep South. The year was 1891, and J. L. McCormick can still quote the words, as his "daddy told it." "I looked down the road," the elder McCormick told his son, "and saw our family doctor coming along in his buggy. Behind the buggy and harnessed to it with a rope around his neck followed a colored boy. Behind the boy came a mob of angry white people. The boy was the son of a man accused of molesting a white woman. When the mob couldn't find the father they took the son. I'd always had a lot of respect for that white doctor—thought he was quite a man. But they lynched that boy for something they said his father had done, and our doctor led the way to the hanging in his buggy. After that I turned to my wife and said: 'Wife, I'm going to gather this crop and leave this doggone place. I'm not going to raise my children here.'"

True to his word, the elder McCormick named his youngest son Langston after the black community by that name in the Indian Territory, cut and cashed his last crop in Alabama, and headed for what is today Oklahoma. His wife did not survive the last harvest in the South. She never saw the place of her husband's vision, a place where they dreamed their children would grow up free. At the turn of the century the Indian Territory was a promised land to thousands of black families who sought refuge and self-determination beyond the crushing stigma of racial discrimination and omnipresent white terror in the postreconstruction South.

For more than seventy years Exodus Adams and Joseph Langston McCormick, sons of Oklahoma pioneers and pioneers in their own right, have been neighbors in the all-black town of Boley, Oklahoma, incorporated in 1904. Exodus (pronounced Ex-ó-dus) is a small, quick man and, in the path of his father, a breaker and trainer of horses. He is a man who has worked more jobs and days than he can remember, from California to Arizona, but he has always come back to Boley. On seventy-seven acres at the edge of town, calling up and harnessing Bobbie and Molly, Exodus Adams has the look and hands of a man who has arrived in his own time by his own will, succeeded, learned how to draw from the land no more than is needed and how to replace all that he has used. As he sees it: "I got my cattle—fifteen head and a bull—and my two

horses, my team. With the team I can cut ground, feed, plant ... everything with the turning plow, mowing machine, and rake. I don't owe anyone. Whatever we make with these horses is ours.'' Holding the reins to Bobbie and Molly, I could feel the man's skills in the smooth purchase and instant response of his horses. A movement of one finger on the leather, a word—and Bobbie and Molly do as they are bid, not with a spirit that has been exhausted or broken with the whip or excess of labor but with an unquestioning, willing pull.

JOSEPH LANGSTON MCCORMICK learned to strap a gun over his belt or tuck it in at his waist before he had reached his full height—six feet, two. For his whole working life until he retired after forty years as Boley and Okfuskee County lawman, McCormick left the cabin each morning armed. In a territory that far exceeded the Okfuskee bailiwick that McCormick patroled, he had a reputation for being fast and well practiced with his side arm. White folks did not make funny remarks about the color of J. L. McCormick's skin in Okfuskee County, at least not to his face. And those newcomers who did had a way of not repeating the error. For all McCormick's size and formidable reputation for speed and accuracy on the draw, he seems proudest of the fact that ''in all my forty years as lawman here I only hit one man, and that because I was caught in a place where I couldn't stop him from hitting me any other way. And I busted my finger doing that.'' The old sheriff laughed, holding up a slightly crooked finger, a permanent reminder of this one slip in his lifelong code of combat.

The history of Boley, Oklahoma, (one of a handful of surviving all-black towns of some fifty started in the nation after the Civil War) is the history of thousands of families like the Adamses and the McCormicks who were drawn to Boley by the unique concept of a black-choice brand of American apartheid. Such lofty concepts were not, however, a factor in the immigration of blacks who preceded these pioneers into the territory and even into Okfuskee County. The first mass immigration of blacks into the Indian Territory was a forced move. They came as the slaves of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes. Under the federal Indian Removal Act of 1830 the southern states succeeded in pushing the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw from their homelands east of the Mississippi into the newly designated Indian Territory. Sometimes the removal occurred peaceably, sometimes violently as in the Seminole War. These five tribes were dubbed ''civilized'' because they had lived in peace with the antebellum South and had adopted many of the cultural and economic trappings of that region, including the ownership of plantations and black slaves. However, as the white and associated slave population in the South multiplied and plantation masters sought to expand their holdings, the Five Tribes became an obstruction to white expansion.

Privately endowed, the Creek Seminole College offered instruction to black students soon after the founding of Boley. The school ceased operating after the building burned down in 1912.

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Frequently, black slaves enjoyed influence among Indian masters.

It is estimated that between four and five thousand black slaves were brought into the Indian Territory between 1830 and 1848 when the last remnants of the slave-owning tribes were relocated there. Even up to the advent of the Civil War, Indians continued to import black slaves to clear land and perform other services. The relationship between Indian masters and black slaves differed sharply from traditional master-slave relationships in the deep South. For example, the Creeks, who held the largest number of slaves among the Five Civilized Tribes, had the reputation of being particularly easy on their slaves. Reports from travelers to the Indian Territory during this period (including a journal kept by Washington Irving) reveal that slave and master often worked side by side and shared the same food and dwelling. Apparently, life among the Creeks in eastern Oklahoma was so attractive that escapees from slave-holding states fled to Creek territory where they could expect little social distinction between members of the tribe and blacks. Slaves were treated more as fellow workers in the tribe's employment rather than as chattels of an absolute master.

Frequently, black slaves of the Indians enjoyed a position of special value and influence in the tribe. Historian John Hanson Beadle noted that slaves of the Indians were sometimes called "linksters" because of their ability to speak English and their familiarity with white customs. One Creek slave contrasted his situation with less fortunate brothers to the south. "I was eating out of the same pot with the Indians, going anywhere in this country I wanted to, while they was still licking the master's boots in Texas."

However, the slave's life among Indians in Oklahoma was not always easy or acceptable, and many slaves sought their freedom through escape. Some tribes, the Cherokee for instance, had a reputation for being harsher slaveholders than the Creeks.

In spite of the "trail of tears" from their traditional homeland in the East, the Five Tribes in the Indian Territory sided with the South in the Civil War. It was a fatal choice. After Appomattox, Washington invalidated the old treaties and dealt with the Indians as fallen rebels. As treaty breakers they were in the ironic position of having little power to influence the outcome of their new agreements with the federal government. Furthermore, with the legal status of Indian land weakened, whites and freed blacks began "soonering" into the Territory long before its official opening to settlement. With little difficulty, blacks as well as whites circumvented existing statutes and alienated land from the Indians who had joined the losing side in the Civil War.

THE ADAMSES AND MCCORMICKS and hundreds of other families came into the Territory from the South at this time, and some of them—like Exodus Adams's father who was a horse breaker for the Creeks—worked for the tribe or leased land for farming. By 1889 the Dawes Commission secured an agreement from the Five Tribes that recognized speci-

PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRENCE MOORE

Reflecting high hopes for prosperity during the early years of this century were (far left) the handsome residence of E. L. LeGrand, a founder of the First National Bank of Boley, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. A contemporary old building (left) testifies to thwarted dreams.

fically what had been happening by subterfuge: the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw would dissolve their tribal governments. The one-hundred-year experiment in ethnic isolation was ended, and the once inviolate lands were opened for legal settlement by non-Indians. Those pioneers, black and white, who had been eyeing Oklahoma land from afar but lacked the sooners' scofflaw attitude toward tribal rights began coming into the Territory. At this juncture, Oklahoma was the closest accessible frontier in the United States—nearer to the settled states of the East than any of the other states that came into the Union in this century—and, also, rich in prime farm land.

Indian freedmen (former slaves of the Five Tribes) had a considerable advantage over the settlers who emigrated into the Territory right after the Civil War. In the new treaties, which the tribes as Confederate partisans were forced to make with the federal government, the Indians either admitted their slaves as regular members to their tribes with full shares in tribal property or gave an outright grant of land to each former slave. The town of Boley was incorporated in 1904 on land that was originally the allotment of a Creek freedwoman in Okfuskee County—a county that like many others in eastern Oklahoma was carved out of the old Creek nation. During the initial period following emancipation of the Indian slaves, before the influx of thousands of blacks from the South, and before the transplanting of hardcore prejudice onto Oklahoma soil, the freedmen enjoyed a unique social as well as economic status.

Even today people in Boley refer to the heritage of the "native blacks" (for whom the town was originally founded) as distinct from the descendants of those "state blacks" who came afterwards and had not previously lived with the Indians. The distinction also made for a curious prejudice among the blacks themselves.

Historians William B. Bittle and Gilbert Geis (*The Longest Way Home*) state that although the Creek freedmen in Okfuskee County were joined, and eventually inundated, by the inrush of state Negroes: "The freedmen tried to keep their distance from the state Negroes, whom they considered to have a lower status. They called them 'Watchina,' a corruption of Virginia—meaning 'white man'—with the connotation of 'white man's Negro.' But the Creeks, in large part influenced by the ideology of the white men with whom they had been thrust into contact, began to turn their backs on the former slaves they had treated so leniently and with whom they had intermarried so casually." A freedman of the time assessed the situation in his own way: "It was those state niggers from Texas that spoiled it for us, bowing and scraping and scratching the head." Alafair Carter Adams, wife to Exodus for over sixty years, remembers the situation a little differently. She told me that the black people who had lived with the Indians and who were allotted their land tended to expect an easy path for themselves. They were the first, she recalled, to fall for the Back-to-Africa movement that swept through Oklahoma's "black belt" around 1914 and had such a divisive effect on Boley. In Alafair Adams's opinion: "The native people usually lived up everything before they wanted to do anything. And if you ask me, it's because they were given their land in the first place. There were others, too, a lot that claimed they were natives that weren't, just to latch onto a free piece of land here."

The differences between these two groups were not, however, too great to prevent their cooperation in establishing and sustaining the all-black town of Boley in a location that only a few years previously had been just another woods in the Creek nation. "There wasn't nothing here then," says eighty-seven-year-old Exodus Adams, who was eleven when the town was started near his family's farm. "There wasn't no Boley or many of these other towns here then. When we'd have our crop picked we'd have to drive our team all the way to the Shawnee gin. Four or five wagons would go the eighty miles to the Shawnee gin together. We'd double-team it to get up the steep hills. There were no real roads, and it would take us two or three days with the wagons and teams to get there. We'd drive our teams into the wagon yards, and the whole family would stay in the covered family wagon while we sold our crop, ground our corn, and made our trade."

Boley was a place where blacks found "All Men Up—Not Some Down."

Into this pioneer existence, as Adams vividly remembers, white supporters introduced the idea for founding the town. The prime mover was Lake Moore, president of the Fort Smith and Western Township Company. He insisted—in an argument with another man, so the story goes—that Negroes were capable of self-government. The other man was just as insistent that they were not. "The result of the argument," according to Booker T. Washington in *The Outlook* in 1908, "was Boley." The town was named for W. H. Boley, another white man, who was a popular roadmaster of the Fort Smith and Western Railroad with a great interest in the development of Lake Moore's idea. And finally came Thomas M. Haynes, "riding up in a buggy," Exodus Adams recalls, a black employee of the railroad who was selected as the townsite manager for Boley. Land for the town was donated by a Creek freedwoman in 1903, incorporation was in 1904, and immediately word began spreading that Boley was a place where black people would find "All Men Up—Not Some Down" (according to the masthead motto of the local newspaper).

FROM THE BEGINNING BOLEY symbolized the black separatist idea, the separate-but-equal racial thinking of the day as promoted by Booker T. Washington and legally sanctioned by the U. S. Supreme Court in 1896 with Plessy v. Ferguson. After a visit to Boley in 1905 Booker T. Washington said that black towns such as this represented "a dawning race consciousness... which shall demonstrate the right of the Negro ... to have a worthy and permanent place in the civilization that American people are creating."

At the start, though, Boley was a kind of fall-back position for blacks who had tried but failed in the 1890s to convince the federal government to carve an all-black state out of the territories that were to become Oklahoma. Nevertheless, the town thrived on a mix of tremendous enthusiasm, good farm land, and a rapid influx of black Americans who were dissatisfied with the second-class citizenship available to them elsewhere. O. H. Bradley, editorializing in his newspaper *The Boley Progress*, wrote: "Nothing like her ever happened before. Nothing like her will ever happen again. The birth of this town reads like a fairy story....She may be said to have leaped at one bound to her adult age; a buxom young giantess, with a harvest hand's appetite and the capacity of a genius for accomplishing things. Boley surprised the country from center to circumference when she was born. Since then, and more quietly, but none the less effectively, she has continued on her way, demolishing all known records and astonishing the world by the push and activity of her people and the variety of her resources."

Boley pioneer Exodus Adams prepares to hitch up his willing team, Bobbie and Molly.

PHOTO[illegible] DE TERRENCE MO[illegible]

PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRENCE MOORE

Black, white, Indian children romped together before Jim Crow.

In spite of Bradley's mixed metaphors Boley did boom. Within a few years after the founding, the town had a population of twenty-five hundred, a lumber yard, brick plant, bank, and all manner of stores and shops to employ as well as serve people. Even more importantly, Exodus Adams and his family and the hundreds of families who had joined them in raising cotton and corn in Okfuskee County no longer had to haul their crops eighty miles to reach the nearest gin and grist mill. Boley had its own mill and gins, and it had a Fort Smith and Western Railroad station to provide transportation. In 1905 the *Progress* advised readers outside its area that "you should take advantage of these opportunities: What are you waiting for? If we do not look out for our own welfare, who is going to do so for us? Are you always going to depend upon the white race to control your affairs for you? Some of our people have had their affairs looked after by the white man for the past 30 years, and where are they today? They are on the farms and plantations of the white men... with everything mortgaged so that they cannot get away and forever will be so long as they are working upon their farms and trading in their stores." In those days in Boley, before statehood, it really did seem that the American black had at last found a place for himself outside the reach of white resentment. E. J. (Uncle) Jesse Pinkett, Boley poet of the day, was inspired to write:

Get on the Fort Smith and Western
The train will bring you here.
Take any of the coaches
You have no cause for fear.
Here a Negro makes your dresses
And a Negro makes your pants
And hands your mail out
If you'll give him half a chance—
In Boley.

One man remembers that "before the Jim Crow law was perfected, the children of that vicinity—the whites, Indians, and Negroes—played and romped together with their occasional fights and scratches. Before the laws were made prohibiting Negroes from mixing with the other races, this mixing together was never thought of as anything wrong." Hopes ran high in Okfuskee County that when the Territory became a state Boley would head up an all-black county. But the white population would not have it, and one by one, legal and extralegal blocks were raised to thwart the political aspirations of Okfuskee County's black population.

Even the effort by the people of Boley and the surrounding area to govern themselves brought out the most malevolent white prejudice. The *Weleetka American*, reporting on the

PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRENCE MOORE

Playing dominoes is a popular pastime in present-day Boley. Here, Bernice joins several patrons in a game at her place (far left). Mayor Sam Wilcots (left) expects retired blacks and their families to return to Boley.

1907 Republican convention in Okemah to nominate a slate for Okfuskee County officers, questioned viciously: "Is it any wonder that the self-respecting white voter has tabooed the Republican county ticket? A common water bucket on the platform from which both black and white drank, using the same dipper. Will any self-respecting white man cast a vote for anyone who is willing to place himself on the level with a thick-lipped son of Ham in an endeavor to secure a county job?" And another note in the same paper reveals the depth of hostility inspired by Boley's attempt to compete in the democratic political arena with whites: "Don't forget that R. J. Dixon, nominee for representative on the nigger ticket, favors allowing the thick-lipped Boley bucks to ride in the same coach or even in the same seat with your wife or daughter, or the kinky-headed pickaninnies to attend the same school with your children, and if he should, by any chance, go to the legislature he will oppose the separation of the races."

Such demeaning words in print and in personal confrontations were backed up with a dynamiting in Okemah in 1907, the 1911 lynching in Okfuskee County, intimidation by white voting marshals at the polls, and the gerrymandering of voting districts to the disadvantage of black voters. Finally, in 1907, Oklahoma passed Jim Crow laws which segregated blacks and whites in railroad cars, and soon afterwards the black citizen found himself "Jim Crowed" in all public places. Insult and social emasculation came with the passage of the grandfather clause in 1910 which disfranchised practically all blacks by the use of literacy tests and place-of-origin stipulations as qualifications for voting. But long before the grandfather clause, Boley had lost out to Okemah as the location of the county seat, even though both towns were about the same size, the major difference being that Boley was black while Okemah was white. The house of Okemah's only black resident, John Hogan, was dynamited in 1907.

The passage of the grandfather clause had the further effect of stimulating the most violent members among the white population in Oklahoma. "In Delaware, a small town in Nowata County, local Negros, many of them long-time residents of the town, were driven from their homes. A committee of white citizens was appointed to call upon each of the Negro families in town and order them to leave at once," according to a contemporary newspaper account quoted by Bittle and Geis. The account concludes: "The Negros, terrified by this bizarre and violent turn of events, 'made haste to do the bidding of the committee.'" No doubt, black numbers and solidarity in Boley saved the people there from similar outrages.

WHATEVER HOPES THE BLACK PEOPLE of Boley and Okfuskee County had for participation in the American system were dashed. In *The Longest Way Home*, the authors state that the Negro's attempt to gain a place in American culture "was refused not all at once to be sure, but in invidious, piecemeal fashion. Disenfranchised slowly but certainly, the Negro was obliged with each new onslaught to readjust his previous ethic." For two decades Boley continued to prosper economically and to grow (from mid-century until the 1920s the population ranged between three and five thousand). But the "Negro metropolis of the United States," as Boley came to be known, was, in effect, an isolated black city-state in the middle of a region where prejudice and disfranchisement had been legalized and institutionalized. True, in Boley blacks were left alone but only so long as they stayed in their enclave and did not try to extend their perimeter of influence. Still, the town and a good part of the county were theirs, and it was a happier and more secure existence than the humiliating subordination suffered by their brothers as a minority population throughout the rest of the South.

The people I visited in Boley who had lived through this period of city building and agricultural development remember the time with happiness and pride. Rarely, if ever, did they recall the horrible incidents of terror that were visited on Oklahoma blacks by night-riding whites, or the slow squeeze on their rights that was gloated over in the newspapers of the period. The depth and span of their lives, their overview of almost a century of black Boley history have given them a kind of wisdom, a vision that is always just a little beyond the reach of a history of words and photographs, especially

Continued on page 54

The Discovery of a Lost Charles Deas Painting

by John Francis McDermott

Mountain Man Escaping from Indians was a mystery painting when Peter Hassrick, director of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, purchased this dramatic oil for the Center's collection of western art in 1978. Unsigned and undated, the painting brought no documentation with it; the artist and the history of the work were unknown.

The period authenticity of the painting was assured, however, for still legible on the back of the canvas was the imprint of a supply store widely patronized by painters in Saint Louis during the 1840s: "FROM SPORE'S ARTISTS' EMPORIUM. 72 CHESTNUT ST, ST LOUIS, MO."

Both the romantic subject matter and dramatic style of *Mountain Man* are typical of the work of Charles Deas, a master of frontier pictorial reporting in the 1840s. In the words of Deas's biographer, Henry Tuckerman, the artist was attracted by "the wild excitement of frontier life," and all his works reflect the delight he took in the more dramatic aspects of the western scene. Especially did the mountain men, "that reckless breed" whose lives were fraught with danger, interest him.

In the painting which the Buffalo Bill Historical Center acquired, Deas has seized upon a moment that every mountain man must have experienced more than once as he hazarded his life in competition with Indians over beaver pelts. Here a lone trapper, looking with agonized apprehension over his shoulder at pursuers, gallops frantically through a pass, his white horse, ears laid back, as terrified as he. Any hesitation means death, for the Indians on the distant bluff are hot on his trail.

That Deas was the painter can be established by placing this picture beside some of his other works. For Deas, landscape was a backdrop to intensify the effect of emotion. His dramatic heights and valleys match the agitation of his protagonists. The jutting rock upon which *Long Jakes, the Rocky Mountain Man* pauses while listening for approaching danger emphasizes the loneliness of this solitary man who must rely solely on quickness of perception. In *The Death Struggle* the somber nature of the precipitous ravine into which the two antagonists are about to plunge serves to augment the horror of the fate to which the passions of Indian and trapper have doomed them.

Less rugged is the background of *Group of Sioux*. Here a family party are resting while they watch a man gallop across a vast plain below. The sense of space and freedom is tinged, however, with a hint of forboding. On a distant hill to the far right appears a group of small figures resembling that of the Indians in *Mountain Man*. Is this the same band which was pursuing the trapper?

Precise dating of *Mountain Man* is not possible. *The Death Struggle*, dated 1845, was in the possession of the American Art Union by April of 1845 and must, therefore, have been completed very early that year. *Group of Sioux*, also dated 1845, may have been next. These dates suggest that *Mountain Man Escaping from Indians* was painted either very soon after Deas's return from a trip to the Pawnee country in October of 1844 or in 1845 after completion of *The Death Struggle* and *Group of Sioux*.

Charles Deas (1818–1867) was a Philadelphian who achieved modest success by the age of twenty-two as an anecdotal painter. But his real career began in 1840 when George Catlin's traveling Indian Gallery aroused Deas's interest in the frontier country and he set out to visit his older brother, Lieutenant George Deas of the Fifth Infantry, then stationed at Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chien) on the Mississippi.

So fascinated was the young man by this new world that for seven years he wandered from army post to army post as far north as Fort Snelling, observing the wild scenery and studying the customs of the Sioux and Winnebagoes. Deas then traveled westward over the Iowa Territory with the United States Dragoons up the Platte valley to the Pawnee villages. In the winters he settled down with his overflowing sketch book in a Saint Louis studio and was soon acclaimed a Saint Louis artist.

Deas established contacts with the American Art Union in New York and the Art Union of Cincinnati, enjoying an excellent press wherever his pictures were shown. He remained in Saint Louis until 1847. On a visit to New York that year Deas was overcome by melancholia, and in 1848 he had to be confined to an asylum. Though he lived seventeen years longer, his career was ended and his name forgotten.

During Deas's seven years in the West, he produced thirty works of record and probably created twice as many. But so obscure did this once popular artist become that by 1950 no more than half a dozen of his works could be found to illustrate an account of his life on the frontier—and two of these were only engravings after lost paintings. However, with the discovery of the hitherto unrecorded painting acquired by the Cody museum in 1978, the reappearance in 1980 of the long-lost *Group of Sioux* and of the original *Long Jakes* of 1844, the value of Deas as a chronicler of the western frontier is being established. Recently, *Group of Sioux* was purchased by a New York dealer for $210,000. **AW**

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For additional information on Deas, see John Francis McDermott, "Charles Deas, Painter of the Frontier," *The Art Quarterly*, Autumn, 1950.

John Francis McDermott *is research professor emeritus at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. He has published numerous works on painters of the Mississippi valley in the first half of the nineteenth century.*

Pictures continue overleaf.

BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER

Mountain Man Escaping from Indians

COURTESY OF JOHN FRANCIS McDERMOTT AND JAMES MARONEY

Group of Sioux

COURTESY OF JOHN FRANCIS McDERMOTT

The Death Struggle

All photographs are from the Asahel Curtis collection at the Washington State Historical Society in Tacoma.

Photographer Asahel Curtis

Chronicler of the Northwest

by Richard Frederick

ASAHEL CURTIS was a commercial photographer of long standing reputation in the Pacific Northwest. Working with bulky, large-format cameras and heavy tripods, he made over sixty thousand exposures from 1897 until his death in 1941, leaving behind a visual record which offers an important documentation of changing times in the Northwest and Alaska. Photography was no stranger to Asahel's family, as his brother was the famed Indian-chronicler Edward Curtis, whose remarkable twenty-volume series on the North American Indian stands as an unequaled photographic record of a vanishing culture.

Asahel's ventures in photography began in 1897, when at the age of twenty-three he received a commission from his brother to follow the stampede of gold seekers to the Yukon. He spent two years in Alaska, visually tracing the joys and frustrations of an army of men given over to the lure of gold. He supported himself in part by taking pictures of the miners, and like the others tried his own hand for a time in the mines.

In his diary Asahel tells of the frustrations he met in attempting to sink a shaft into the permanently frozen earth—all at the rate of a foot to a foot and one-half a day. The ground was like concrete, softened only by a fire during the nighttime hours. Often the fires went out, and thick sheets of ice formed in the bottom of the hole. Curtis never reached pay dirt and in the end complained that he found his search for gold a "useless undertaking."

Curtis returned to Seattle and worked in a photo-engraving plant until he opened his own studio in 1905. He became well known in northwest society, and over time many of the area's leading industrial firms were his clients. He provided documentation of their products and services, as well as photos to be used for advertising and promotion. Advertisements with his photographs were used extensively in such magazines as *Sunset*, *National Geographic*, *Argus*, and *The Coast*; a number of books and pamphlets were published using his pictures.

Curtis's collection ranges from photographs of billboards (advertising the best and worst of the age) to an extensive series of views illustrating Seattle's major regrade projects.

DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL

These regrade projects involved moving more dirt than was excavated in the Panama Canal and were designed to lessen the commercially unattractive grades of Seattle's steep hills. By the use of steam shovels and hydraulics, great portions of these hills were sluiced into the tidelands south of the city, which were filled and built upon by Seattle's burgeoning industry.

Ship building, fishing, and related maritime activities have long been leading enterprises on the chill waters of Puget Sound. Curtis worked closely with fishermen and with builders and refitters, making records of ships in dry dock, tugs, fishing boats, and cargo ships of myriad descriptions as they passed into the busy ports of the Sound. He also took commissions from railroads, preparing scenics which were used nationally to extol the virtues of tourism in the Northwest. Logging and mining were important in the region's development, and many of Asahel's pictures focus on these industries and on workers and the methods they used to harvest the natural bounty of the area.

An avid outdoorsman, Curtis was frequently drawn to

The faggot carrier, 1910

Balancing her "burden basket" on her shoulders, this Makah woman is going about a daily ritual of collecting pieces of firewood from the drift along the shore near her home. This task, normally performed by women of her age group, provided fuel for her family's cooking and warming fires.

Sluiskin, Chief of the Yakimas, 1915

In 1870 P. B. Van Trump and General Hazard Stevens, son of Washington's first territorial governor, engaged Sluiskin to guide them to the summit of Mount Rainier. The Indian took them to a camp part way up the mountain and tried to dissuade them from going any further: "An evil spirit lives in the lake of hot water on the very top of the mountain; he objects to anyone coming up there. If anyone does go to the top of Mount Tacoma (Mount Rainier) he does not live to come back. . . . If by any extraordinary effort you should escape these dangers (rocks thrown by the evil spirit and high winds) and should practically reach the top of the mountian, the evil spirit that reigns there will thrust you into the lake of hot water and you will certainly die there." Despite the Indian's warnings, Van Trump and Stevens persisted and became the first white men to reach the summit.

nearby mountains, making several first ascents in the icy Cascades and Olympics. As a founder of the Seattle Mountaineers, he long pushed for contruction of both roads and trails into the mountains. Curtis was immortalized by the Washington Highways Division, of which he was always a booster, when they named a rest stop on a Cascade highway in his honor. In addition his name is given to a high ridge on the north face of fourteen-thousand-foot Mount Rainier, where he often guided climbers and always photographed with a passion. He enjoyed no small success in the sale of mountain views, including a number of hand-tinted prints of exceptional beauty.

VIEWERS OF THE CURTIS COLLECTION are often interested in comparing the directions and methods used by Asahel and his well-known brother Edward. Technically their methods differed little, though Edward was sometimes known to wait weeks or months to get the precise image he wanted—a leisure impossible for his brother who was tied to commercial schedules and was in business more to provide records rather than works of art.

Perhaps the major difference in their work was one of general focus—Asahel was a booster of twentieth-century culture, intimately involved with documenting and promoting growth. His work was sponsored by chambers of commerce, trade boards, industrial associations, and land developers. He closely identified with the economic interests of the region and in general philosophy favored continued and expanded growth.

While Asahel Curtis usually documented the growth of cities and industry, he also photographed Indians (primarily the coast-dwelling Makahs), though as northwest author Murray Morgan points out, with somewhat different results than his brother Edward. As Morgan puts it (in David Sucher's *Asahel Curtis Sampler* [1973]): "In Edward's pictures every detail played a part in achieving the photographer's preconceived desire; in Asahel's pictures the disarray was essential. The debris outside a Makah house, the whale skeletons and old

Princess Angeline, 1909

Princess Angeline, probably the most photographed woman in the early Pacific Northwest, was the daughter of Chief Seattle for whom the city was named. Her wrinkled visage appeared on souvenir plates, fans, and screens. Curtis offered several postcards with her picture, using portraits made by earlier photographers, since she had died in 1896 before he started his business. Curtis made a valuable contribution to the history of Washington by making numerous copies of photographs, sketches, and paintings dating to the founding of Seattle in 1851. He identified and captioned many of the photographs in a series of albums which were the basis for a planned, but never published, pictorial history of the Northwest.

Forest giants, c. 1907

The pioneers who first settled in western Washington found the area covered with great stands of virgin timber. During the 1850s the logging and sawmilling industry grew rapidly on Puget Sound, as the law permitted milling companies to gain title to large tracts of valuable timber at low prices. Since the construction of a sawmill involved the expenditure of a large amount of money, the pioneer mill builders located where they could gain title to as much timber as possible. This problem of assuring future supplies led to the building of mills at widely separated places, each mill having its own small town to supply the needs of its workers.

boats and broken harpoons were part of Indian life, a boast of past wealth. They do not appear in Edward's neat arrangements; they were omnipresent in Asahel's. One brother photographed the white man's romantic dream of the Indian past; the other showed what a changing culture looked like at the moment of his visit. Asahel did not rearrange, he recorded. He was a good reporter.''

Asahel may be seen as more of a craftsman than an artist, for though his work was of high quality, his subject matter was largely familiar to most of his viewers. Edward, however, ventured into the unknown, compiling not only the greatest photographic record of these Indians ever made, but also transcriptions of talks with wise men on religion, legends, ceremonies, and ways of life—all in imminent danger of being lost forever.

Pictures continue overleaf.

Together the brothers offer contrasting views of America, one showing primarily the rise of industry and cities, and the other offering a monument to the people who preceded the onslaught of civilization. Though Asahel's work may be more prosaic, its historical value for future generations is certain to be high.

The Washington State Historical Society in Tacoma received the Curtis collection after Asahel's death in 1941. Reprinting of this great treasure, consisting of over 30,000 large-format negatives, began in earnest several years ago, aided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The aim of this preliminary program, directed by Jeanne Engerman of the museum staff, is to print and catalog as much of the collection as possible, and to plan traveling exhibits which will tour the Northwest and Alaska. Distinguished consultants from Washington and Alaska have been working with the collection, providing a body of interpretative material for the exhibits and catalog. A second grant application to begin construction of exhibits is pending, and displays should begin traveling in the fall of 1981. **AW**

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While Asahel Curtis's photographs have been seen in numerous articles and books on the Northwest, only one book thus far has been done on his work alone. This is an enlightening compilation by David Sucher, *The Asahel Curtis Sampler* (1973). In it a wide-ranging selection of Curtis's views have been placed with contemporary magazine and newspaper articles illustrating growth and development in the Northwest.

Richard Frederick *is a photographer working for the Washington State Historical Society and is now engaged in reprinting the entire collection of Asahel Curtis negatives. He is author of* North Pacific Frontiers.

Charles Ainsworth at solitaire, 1898

A typical miner's cabin averaged about twelve by fourteen feet. Built from logs chinked with moss, it generally had a wooden floor and a single window. The roof, made of small poles, was overlaid with moss and covered with dirt six or more inches deep, which in summer was fertile ground for grass and weeds. A sheet-iron Yukon stove, which sold for about sixty-five dollars, provided heat and even in the coldest weather could raise the temperature to an uncomfortable level. To regulate the heat and to provide ventilation, a small box-like opening was often built into the roof.

DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL

Gold seekers selling belongings, 1898

Disappointed gold seekers sell their outfits along the Dawson waterfront. Food supplies brought fair prices, but clothing, guns, and equipment sold at a fraction of their cost on the outside.

Chin Gee Hee, c. 1905

Chin Gee Hee had great influence over Chinese labor in Seattle and was a major contractor for several of the early railroads in the area. He helped build the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad which, despite its name, never traversed the mountains to Walla Walla but did help open up the coal fields in nearby Renton and Newcastle. Chin's firm, the Quong Tuck Company, was one of the leading importers of oriental goods in the Northwest. In 1906 Chin raised several million dollars among the Chinese on the coast and returned to China to build the Suning Railroad, which he successfully managed until his death.

Cannery topping machine, 1913

This photograph of the Apex Fish Company's plant in Anacortes, Washington, illustrated an article on the salmon industry of Puget Sound and was published in the Pacific Fisherman Annual *of 1914. The printed photo was retouched, making the table and drawers on the side appear spotlessly clean. According to the article: "The floor of the cannery, to which the fish are carried by conveyors, is clean and polished from the night before. Not a trace of debris is left, the floor having been washed and scrubbed and salted until it is fragrant and clean, so clean that one would not hesitate to eat his breakfast on it. Then the hose is turned on the great mass of salmon, and the natural slime with which they are coated is washed off. . . . The [cannery] equipment is the most perfect that is possible for human ingenuity to devise. There is no food product handled more expeditiously, in a more scientific or sanitary manner. . . . It is not possible for an atom of foreign matter to get into the cans of salmon in any of these various processes, as the strictest care is exercised in all stages."*

Sorting coal at Newcastle Mine, 1902

From the mid-1870s until about 1915, coal was big business in the Northwest. One of the deepest and most productive mines was located at Newcastle, just east of Seattle. Coal usually came from the mines mixed with slate, clay, and other impurities that had to be picked out by hand. Coal sorters, like the underground miners, typically came from Great Britain, Italy, Scandinavia, or the Slavic countries. They worked ten to twelve hours a day and received wages in the form of coupons redeemable at the company store. Competition from lower-priced California oil eventually closed the northwest mines.

DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL

Fifth Avenue Regrade, 1911

By 1911 regrading had worked its way to Fifth Avenue above the business district on Cherry. Over the years many techniques were used in removing and transporting the earth to the tide flats. An early method called for plows to loosen the ground for gangs of shovelers who filled wagons similar to those illustrated here. The steamshovel, introduced to Seattle about 1905, was a great boon to the earthmovers. Narrow gauge rail lines and trestles, sluice pipes for hydraulic transport, and endless conveyor belts were familiar sights as the industrial boosters of the age refashioned the foundations for Seattle's twentieth-century growth.

Horse-drawn combine, 1912

A combine, or "combined harvester," could cut, thresh, and sack wheat in one operation, lowering the previous need for harvest hands from twenty to five or six. Generally a team of thirty-two horses pulled the combine; the power to run the sickle bar, header reel, and threshing mechanism came from the drive wheel. The driver perched on a platform and guided his team with reins connected to the two lead horses. A crew of five was normal: the driver; the header-tender, who tended the cutting apparatus; the combine man, who rode above the rear wheels and had the job of keeping the combine level and the machinery working smoothly; the sack-jig, who filled burlap bags with wheat coming from a spout; and the sewer, who sewed the bags and dumped them three to five at a time in the fields, where they were picked up by several men following in a wagon.

DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL

The automobile in 1907

The mechanical imperfections of early automobiles and a general ignorance of their operation resulted in many experiences like that in the illustration. There were few roads, none of which was hard surfaced, and little to indicate the impending rapid development of the automobile.

Asahel Curtis cutting ribbon at horse-trail dedication, 1931

The photographic collection of Asahel Curtis not only covers the sometimes frantic pace of industrial and agricultural development but also offers many timeless views of the great mountains and forests which make up the landscape of the Pacific Northwest. Here Curtis, ever the promoter, dedicates a new horse trail in the Tatoosh Range. Mount Rainier is in the background.

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Adobe: Mud for castles and hovels

by James Maurer

TO THE UNINITIATED, the term ''adobe house'' may evoke an image of a small, ill lit mud shack with dirt floors and bugs. That image may have been true in the past and may still be true in many under-developed countries. But modern, western adobe structures can be well designed, airy, well lit, and integrated with solar collector features.

Although adobe is associated with the Southwest, there are few places in the world where some form of adobe has not been used. One of the most easily obtained materials, sun-dried earth blocks have been used for thousands of years. Residential adobe ruins in Egypt predate the Great Pyramid of Giza. The ruins of Tyre and Nineveh are structurally related to the still-occupied pueblos at Taos and Acoma in New Mexico. One of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, was probably built of adobe bricks. The arid lands of the world, where sand and clay are found, and where the sunshine is bountiful, have long histories of earth construction. Because of this construction in highly populated areas such as India, Africa, and the Middle East, about eighty percent of all residential structures in the world today are of adobe.

Among many reasons for the historical use of adobe, two are most compelling: availability of materials for adobe and the lack of other building materials. Suitable soil for adobe can be found almost anywhere; it needs some sand and five to thirty percent clay. Even poor soil can be used for adobe if some type of strengthener is added, such as chopped straw. Or a different type of construction might be more suitable, such as wattle and daub, where a framework of sticks is plastered with adobe mud. Particularly in the Southwest, other building materials are scarce. The few forests provide little lumber, and the desert trees are usually stunted. Commonly found throughout the West, rocks were used by many Indian tribes at locations such as Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon, and Quarai. But adobe is easier to work, to weatherproof, and to finish.

Adobe: Arroyo Seco

Architecture frames nature as blue sky and the white tip of Lobo Peak draw our eye through an elegant opening in this abandoned New Mexico adobe.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MUENCH

Heat travels slowly through adobe, penetrating walls by nightfall. A desert night's chill lingers into the day.

Adobe is a forgiving and highly plastic medium, allowing for great range of artistic expression. It has been used for the smooth, simple style of Taos Pueblo, for the high Gothic style of the Huning Castle in Albuquerque, and for intricate Victorian and baroque ornamentation in early Tucson. Traditionally a poor-man's material, it has also been used to express the heights of man's belief in such structures as the California and Arizona missions.

Dirt, being underfoot, is cheap. For a family of settlers who needed shelter but had little money, adobe was the logical choice. It requires intensive labor but a small investment of capital—an appealing circumstance to poor families with many members to lend a hand. The techniques of working with adobe are fairly simple, so that even children can become accomplished "adoberos."

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MUENCH

With all the fuss today about energy-efficient dwelling units, it may surprise people to learn that "energy-efficient" adobe structures have been placed as far back as 2500 B.C. in Priene, Greece. Contrary to popular thought, adobe is not a good insulator, but its mass and density make it a good tempering medium. Heat and cold travel slowly through a dense medium, with the result that the day's heat travels through the wall to warm up the interior at night. During winter, and in desert regions where nights are cool, this feature is desirable. Conversely, the cool of the night air chills the adobe, and this chill reaches the interior during the heat of the day. This tempering effect has been in use for centuries and was forgotten only when "cheap" air-cooling machines persuaded people to ignore the nature of materials and good site orientation.

Modern homeowners, particularly owner-builders, are turning more and more to adobe; it is inexpensive and energy-efficient in a world of rising costs and uncertain fuel supply. True, adobe has a low R-value (which indicates insulation ability), and many modern frame houses are proudly advertised as having R-values up to three times that of adobe. But, those same well-insulated frame walls often do not have enough mass for heat storage in them.

And air temperature alone does not give a true measure of comfort in a house. Air temperature and mean radiant temperature (or the amount of heat the immediate surroundings radiate) are used in "comfort couplets" to determine thermal comfort. For example, a house with an MRT of 75° needs an air temperature of only 63° to be as thermally comfortable as a house with an MRT of 60° and an 84° air temperature. Since insulated frame walls heat up and cool off rapidly, the air must be heated more often to keep the temperature high enough to make the house comfortable. But an adobe house with proper site orientation, and possibly some passive, solar-collecting features, will maintain a more even temperature for a long period. This means less energy must be used to heat the air in an adobe structure than in a frame house, with correspondingly higher energy efficiency.

Adobe has secondary energy-saving effects in that it is a "low technology" product. High-tech products, such as aluminum and steel, require great amounts of energy in their manufacture, transportation, and assembly at the final location. Adobe, on the other hand, is usually a local product, needing comparatively little energy to manufacture. If the home-builder has more time than money, bricks can be made on site, with mostly manual labor. Laying the blocks uses muscle power rather than machine power. Furthermore, except

Taos Pueblo, New Mexico

Behind a circular oven for baking bread rise the massive adobe walls of North House. Each apartment has the precaution of a roof entrance reached by ladder.

Mission San José de la Laguna

The New Mexico sun beats down on the three crosses of Laguna Pueblo church, built by Franciscans in the early 1700s. Inside adobe walls bear symbolic designs.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MUENCH

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURCKHALTER

Casa Oliveros, Hermosillo, Mexico

A ceiling of timbers and reeds graces a passageway in this modern adobe residence. Bordering the patio garden is a floor of oiled, low-fired, Querobabi adobe brick.

Living in adobe has been likened to living in a work of art.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURCKHALTER

Sackheim Adobe, Tucson, Arizona

Within the original adobe walls of 1873, this redesigned kitchen displays handmade Talavera tiles and two ranges, one a wood-burning stove under a unique copper hood.

for high-altitude, cold-winter sites, adobe structures usually do not use costly petroleum-based insulations.

Many contemporary movements stress the goal of self-sufficiency, the ability to work with one's hands as a craftsman or dedicated tinker, with friends and family to help, in much the same manner we believe our ancestors did. Adobe fits well with these convictions, as an inexperienced worker can construct his own adobe dwelling. Adobes are fun places to live and easily take on the personalities of their owners. Adobe is plastic and flexible, with sculptural qualities all its own, enabling the owner to express his tastes. Unlike frame and drywall, adobe is easy to change. Walls can be added or subtracted, niches chopped out of walls; blocks can be left natural and exposed, white-washed, or plastered. Individual expression reigns, and living in an adobe has been likened to living in a work of art.

Finally, in some places, such as Santa Fe and many small communities throughout the West, history and tradition reach out and grab you, making you feel uncomfortable if you live in anything *but* an adobe. And if we have no sense of history and tradition, what claim can we possibly make on the future? **AW**

James Maurer *has a long-standing interest in adobe architecture. He is currently engaged as a land-use planner.*

Mission San Diego de Alcalá

Greenery accentuates the simple white facade of California's oldest mission, founded by Father Serra in 1769. Later adobe missions were more ornate.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MUENCH

The story of the ship Niantic

Invincible Amphibian

by Joan Parker

BENEATH THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO a phantom fleet lies buried—merchantmen, whalers, and passenger vessels that for one brief moment long ago shared a purpose and a destination. Jammed with argonauts and high hopes, ships of all kinds and conditions became instant passenger liners and converged on Yerba Buena Cove during the gold rush. In 1849 between seven and eight hundred of this ad lib armada sailed into the bay in the biggest boat race in history. Few regained the open sea. Captains and crews joined passengers in the scramble for fortune in the mines. Swaying uneasily at anchor, an abandoned argosy faced a variety of fates.

Reminders of far oceans and high adventure, these relics of the old, gold days still sleep largely undisturbed where they sank and settled. On the sea-turned-land over their bones rise the glass and steel skyscrapers of the financial heart of San Francisco. Once in a while, however, as the city reaches upward and foundations go deeper, the remains of an old-timer obtrude and speak again of "a city of ships . . . a city ruled by tides."

In the spring of 1978 as workmen prepared the underpinnings for yet another building, they came upon the venerable remains of the good ship *Niantic* at the corner of Clay and Sansome streets. A true gold rush veteran, she shared a history common in many ways with that of other forty-niners. She had been about her business at one end of the world when unexpected excitements altered her course and brought her to a ragtag city on a western shore. Once there her luck shifted, and she was caught up in the general improvisation. Cut and shaped to meet the immediate needs of the ever transitional times, she adapted and readapted. She suffered a land change into something strange and rich, making a new fortune in a role never intended for her. Prominent in the general compulsive documentation, she appears in the diaries and books of those who encountered her during their adventures. And she left more than her heart in San Francisco—she never got home. This is her story.

A 452-ton, three-masted, full-rigged sailing ship, *Niantic* was launched at Chatham, Massachusetts, in 1831 as a merchantman for the China trade, according to Franklin E. Perham, a grandson of the last captain to command her. She was named for a tribe of Algonquin Indians who once lived in southeast Connecticut and adjoining Rhode Island. Bluff-bowed and broad-beamed, she measured 119′6″ by 29′ with a depth of 19′6″ and a storage capacity of 800 tons. She had two decks, a billethead, and a square stern. A stocky, small, seaworthy craft, she was built to endure for N. L. & G. Griswold of New York.

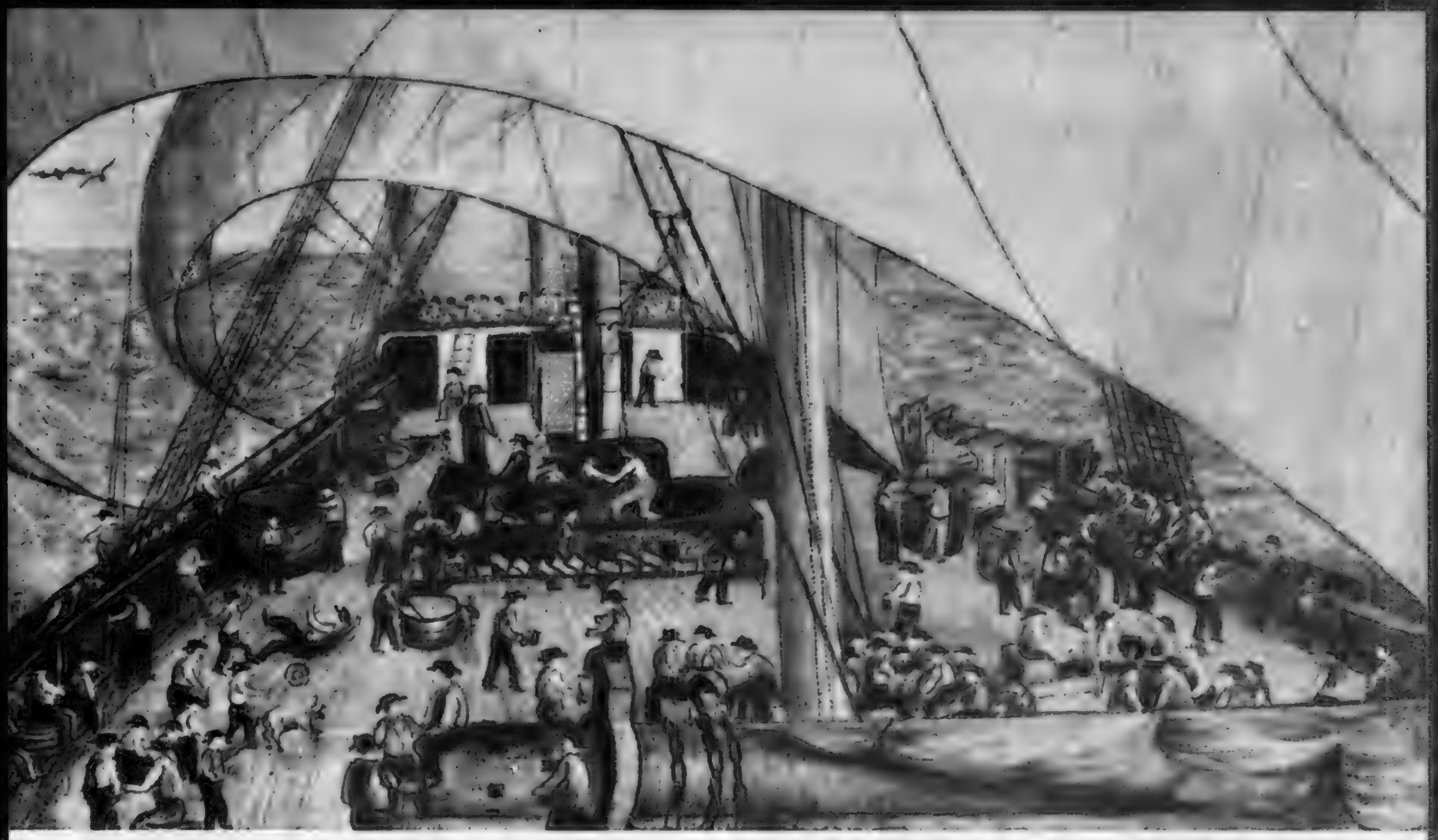
When *Niantic* left Warren, Rhode Island, in September, 1848, on what was to be her last voyage, she was a veteran of adventures on many seas. In her youth she had been a merchantman running between New York and China. Sailing for Canton in 1834, she carried pigs of lead and 150,000 Spanish pillar dollars. Her hold fragrant with its cargo of tea, cinnamon, and silk on the return trip, *Niantic* was forced to lie war-bound for three months because of hostilities between China and Great Britain. The voyage took 110 days, and *Niantic* reached New York after more than fifteen months away. Aboard on that long voyage was George Davis, a young Canadian sailor who recorded events in his diary. Davis kept to the sea but never made another voyage aboard the *Niantic*. Fifteen years later, however, he was to see her again—in San Francisco under circumstances beyond his wildest imaginings.

In 1844 *Niantic* became a whaler, leaving Sag Harbor, New York, for the whaling grounds off New Zealand. Gone for almost three years, she returned in February, 1847, with 120 barrels of sperm oil, 2,400 barrels of whale oil, and 10,000 pounds of whalebone. Her days as a merchantman, however, were not over. Later that year she sailed from New York to New Orleans for the New Line and from New York to Liverpool for Slate's Liverpool Line.

ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1848, A WHALER AGAIN, *Niantic* left Warren, Rhode Island, to hunt in the northwest Pacific, under command of Captain Henry Cleveland of West Tisbury, Massachusetts—"not only a good specimen of a sailor but equally a good specimen of a man." Aboard were his three sons: James Freeman, first mate; Sylvanus, second mate; and Daniel Athearn, third mate—"active and gentlemanly men."

Niantic's last voyage was routine until she reached Payta, Peru, one of the chief ports of supply in the heyday of whaling. There Captain Cleveland, hearing exciting news, wrote a letter to *Niantic*'s owners that was to seal the fate of the ship. Dated March 15, 1849, it read:

"Dear Sirs: I arrived here with the *Niantic* on the 8th, ship in good order, crew all well, no oil. My intention was to recruit with vegetables and go to the North West coast but in consideration of the great demand for ships to take passengers from Panama to San Francisco, being a great number at that place,



MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On Deck of Niantic. *Daniel Nason sketched his fellow passengers at myriad pursuits under a dramatic sweep of sail as* Niantic *rushed for California gold.*

per advice of the last steamer which touched here the day before I arrived, and a great prospect of doing first rate for all concerned, I think it my duty to prepare the ship with the utmost speed and lose one North West season. So in 10 days, I shall leave here for Panama with prospect of remitting from there some $20,000 or $30,000, and sincerely hope it will meet with your approbation. Shall take light freight enough from here to Panama to pay our expenses. Have put it under the direction of A. Rudent Co., who are exerting themselves to forward me on this expedition to insure a good result. A steamer is expected to touch here tomorrow which will take letters to a merchant in Panama and secure the best passengers.

"I have been offered here $20,000 to go on the voyage and return to this port which would occupy six months. Some merchants here have offered $18,000 for the ship, I taking out whaling apparatus and most of the casks and provisions. Should I meet my expectations I want to keep the ship going as long as it pays well. Should there not be business I must go on with whaling again. Your advice will be anxiously looked for and gratefully received. Please advise as to sale of ship should there be a great offer. Please write by first steamer in care of the American Consul at this place and also at Panama. Assist my wife to forward a letter by the same.

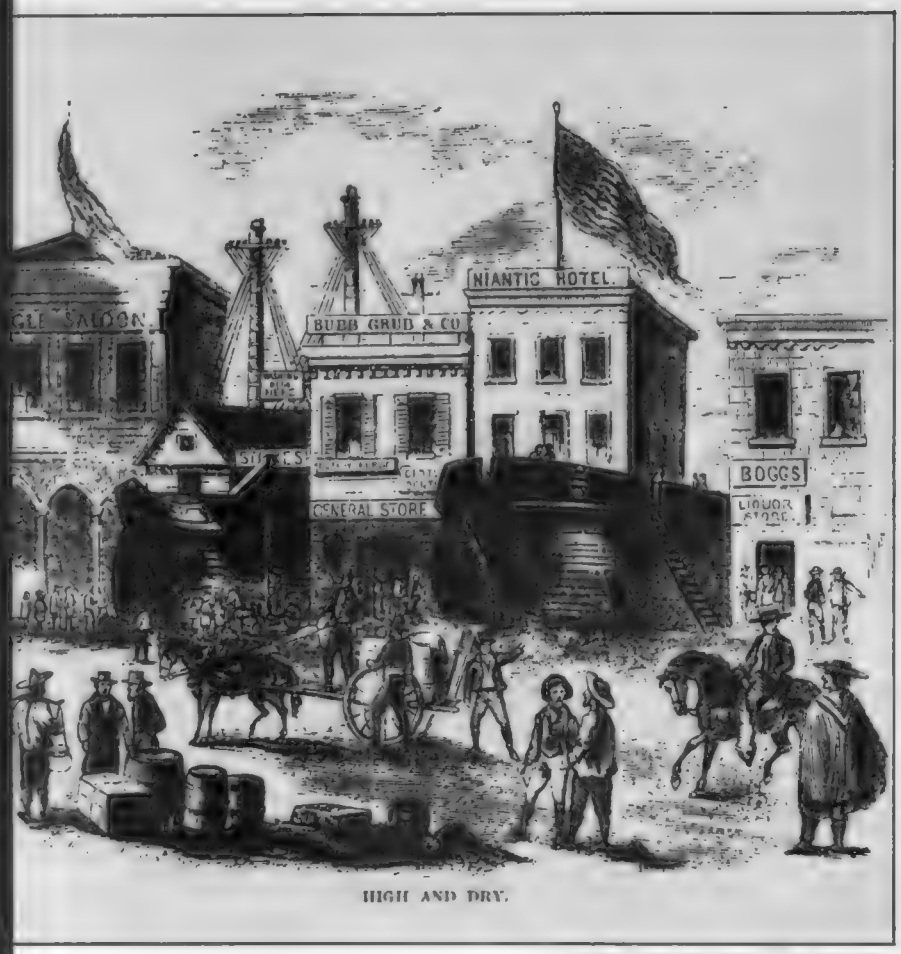
Am very respectfully,
Your servant,
Henry Cleveland."

Panama was bedlam. It was glutted with thousands of gold seekers who had avoided the dangerous trip around Cape Horn by taking passage to Chagres, going upriver to Gorgona, then crossing the hilly southern edge of the isthmus on foot or by mule to catch a ship for California. But the tropical weather, disease, boredom, and dissipation provided their own dangers during the long, frustrating wait. Captain Cleveland had sent a letter to the American Consul in Panama asking him to act as agent, and he in turn gave priority to those longest on the beach. When *Niantic* arrived on April 7, 1849, there was further delay while she converted from whaler to passenger ship.

As there were no wharves and the tide was high, *Niantic* lay several miles from land. When departure day arrived, bungos plied between shore and ship, loading passengers and baggage. "It was May and very warm, and as each of us had to help load his own stuff we had as much work as we wanted," wrote passenger John Cushing.

"Finished taking on passengers at 8 P.M. Took our anchor and stood out to sea with a light breeze from Northward, 246 passengers on board," reads the log for Wednesday, May 2. Cabin class cost $250 and steerage $150. Two on the passenger list were "reported to be lost"—presumably those who had died on shore. The passengers, all men, included lawyers, doctors, ministers, sporting men, deacons, gamblers, mechanics, and four black slaves with their southern owners.

Life was pleasant for the most part. "The ship was light, our hearts were light, so lightly we sailed over the blue waters," wrote Daniel Nason. The travelers read, wrote, brought journals and diaries up to date, watched scenery and sea life,



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM AT SAN FRANCISCO

A Proteus of San Francisco's waterfront, Niantic *was first a storeship and then a hotel, as pictured (inaccurately) in 1854 by Britisher Samuel Marryat.*

slept, talked, and played cards. No gambling was allowed. There was fiddling, dancing, singing, and story telling, and "castles would be built glittering and bright as the gold we were going after to build them with," according to William McCollum.

Passengers were divided into messes of twelve, each with a captain. For every group there was a large tub for meat, a ten-gallon pail for coffee, and a big pan for hardtack. Each man provided his own eating utensils. As the steward called out the number of the mess, the captain walked up with tub, pail, and pan for the supply of sea bread, beef, pork, tea or coffee for his mess. The diet also included rice, beans, sweet potatoes, and duff—a mixture of dough raised overnight with yeast, boiled in bags, and eaten with molasses. Each mess found its own spot on deck, and no other group trespassed. Behind the foremast sat a pair of 200-gallon kettles, formerly used for trying out whale blubber, now kept continually hot in cooking.

Whales seemed to sense that the ship's harpoons had been sold at Payta, that her trying pots were full of stew, that she was not only a converted whaler but a reformed one. "We are often saluted by whales, sometimes coming up near the ship, throwing up a column of water and passing under our keel, displaying to us their gigantic dimensions," wrote John Letts.

Their course was south by west. Unfavorable winds made slow sailing to California from Panama, and it was necessary to go below the equator to find trade winds. At 110° west longitude *Niantic* headed north for San Francisco.

Then came a calm accompanied by rain, mist, and heat. For days the ship "rolled like a log without sufficient air to cause a ripple." Everything mildewed. Those who were sick got worse; everyone was depressed. "There was a general uneasiness manifested and something foreboding in every face," according to Letts.

On June 4 James Raverty of Louisville, Kentucky, died of ship fever. "This morning after breakfast was served, he was brought out from under the poop deck, which was reserved for the sick, and sewed up in his hammock, with a fifty pound bag of sand at his feet, and at the tolling of the bell the passengers assembled on the deck, rigging, and yards, in every place where they could witness the unusual occurrence of a burial at sea," wrote Nason. The Episcopalian Reverend Mr. Mines read the service, and the body was gentled into the deep. The Captain immediately ordered the ship cleansed and disinfectant distributed. Nobody else perished.

When at last *Niantic* fell in with the north east trades, they filled her sails and hurried her along so rapidly that on reaching the latitude of San Francisco, she was off her course by roughly twelve hundred miles. Undaunted, Captain Cleveland tacked ship and stood in for the coast of California. The passengers now faced gale-force winds. "Wave after wave came," wrote McCollum, "each one higher and more furious than its predecessor till our strong ship was laboring gallantly to overcome them, creaking at every joint, yet at every trial of strength giving us increased confidence in her power of endurance."

WHEN THE SHIP WAS TWENTY MILES NORTH of the entrance to San Francisco Bay, geese, ducks, and loons filled the air. Seals surfaced and watched with interest. A whale swam out to greet the ship, diving and reappearing. The third time up he threw his huge tail into the air and dived—the last time *Niantic* would meet a whale socially or professionally. They sailed through the Golden Gate on a delightful morning with a fresh breeze. "We could not have made a more auspicious entrance," wrote Letts. "The passage was entirely without interruption and the scene most enchanting." "At 9 A.M. let go our anchor in 10 fathoms of water," reads the log for July 6. *Niantic*'s final voyage—from Panama to San Francisco in sixty-five days—was over.

Niantic moored in deep water off Clark's Point at what is today the corner of Broadway and Battery streets. From there to Rincon Point, about a mile distant, ships loafed side by side, five and six deep in some cases. An inside string was along the beach and another offshore with barely channel way between. Bay waters reached up to Montgomery Street.

Captain Cleveland prepared to return to Panama for more passengers. "The captain addressed his crew, requesting every man to do his duty and return to the ship," according to Nason. But a log entry that first day in port was prophetic: "Five of crew deserted." Most of the crew of thirty-two were kanakas (Hawaiians) with the remainder Irishmen and New Englanders. Each felt he was meant to be a rich miner rather

than a poor sailor. Soon they all abandoned ship. Unable to sail *Niantic* without a large crew, the Clevelands bought a smaller brig, the *Mary Wilder,* and were reported on the Columbia River in November.

The good ship *Niantic* was put on the block and advertised in the *Alta California* in August as "a fast sailer, and ready for any voyage." The ad was unrealistic. That month hundreds of vessels stirred restlessly at anchor without a seaman aboard, and more ships arrived daily. Crowding against each other, battered by wind and tide with nobody to pump them out or repair them, many sank where they lay. Some were sold for port dues and broken up for building material and firewood. Others became havens for discouraged miners driven back to San Francisco that winter by foul weather and lack of supplies. Some were used as floating boarding houses or family homes; one became a prison, another a saloon, a hospital, an insane asylum. A few regained the open sea.

Because of scarce storage facilities and building materials, some were hauled to shore and transformed into creatures neither of water nor land called "storeships." *Niantic* was to become the best known of this strange breed. Sold at last, she was floated to a shallow water lot at the foot of Clay Street by sailors hired by a Captain Noyes. They lashed her own empty oil casks to her bottom. The ship once in place, they removed her masts, rigging, and some of her ballast and drove piles on each side to keep her from turning over. Her pump log, used to help steady her, struck a spring of fresh water which "flowed for many a day." Her sails went to make a "strong, capacious tent."

Niantic's bulwarks were raised about eight feet and topped with a shingle roof; the enclosed space was subdivided into offices and stores. Stairs ran from the wharf up the side of the ship to a wide veranda. Her oak hull, divided into warehouses, was pierced with spacious doorways. Early in 1850 an ad in the *Alta* proclaimed, "The owners of the ship *Niantic* announce . . . that said vessel is now ready to receive storage" and commended "the facilities offered of receiving and delivering goods both afloat and on shore, with security against rain and fire."

Tenants for the business concessions soon flocked to her, hanging up their colorful showboards. A sign over her Clay Street entrance, read, "Rest for the Weary and Storage for Trunks." Business boomed, and the versatile ship began to earn a reputed $20,000 per month. William Kelly "was not a little surprised" when he went to seek a friend "to find the counting house on the deck of *Niantic* . . . no longer a buoyant ship surmounted by lofty spars and streamers waving in the wind but a tenement anchored in the mud . . . . Both stores and offices found tenants at higher rents than tenements of similar dimensions on shore would command, and returned a larger and steadier income . . . than the ship would earn if afloat."

By 1850 wharf builders had begun their march out into San Francisco Bay. The success of Central or Long Wharf which stretched 2,000 feet between Sacramento and Clay streets set off a rush for franchises for similar projects. Like long wooden fingers, wharves soon pointed from every street along the waterfront—"a city teeming with wharves." From the shore

COURTESY OF DIONIS COFFIN RIGGS

The title page of the Niantic*'s log shows the sturdy ship as she prepared for her last voyage, a romantic dash from Panama to San Francisco.*

at Montgomery Street, the Clay Street pier thrust 900 feet. Left behind, stuck in the mud, sat the storeship *Niantic*. As parallel piers jutted seaward, lines of piles were driven between them to make cross streets. Piles sunk behind *Niantic* supported a narrow plank for pedestrians. This dangerous walkway was the beginning of Sansome Street which would cut *Niantic* off forever from the open sea.

Steam excavators leveled the sandhills fronting the cove. Sand removed was dumped into the mud flats in the first instance of bay fill. Squatters had scuttled old ships in water lots to substantiate their claims, and these were covered over where they lay. As the filled-in portion of the city grew, wharves became streets, and buildings on piles settled onto solid ground. Furthest inland of all the storeships, *Niantic*—without moving—eventually found herself high and dry on a downtown street, a ship without an ocean.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM AT SAN FRANCISCO

In 1978 excavation in San Francisco's financial district uncovered a portion of Niantic*'s hull, some of which was saved for the Maritime Museum.*

Newcomers were astonished and intrigued to find a vessel so far from its native element surrounded by busy streets and substantial buildings with no clue as to how she got there. George Davis, who had sailed aboard her as a youth on the Canton voyage fifteen years before, saw *Niantic* with mixed emotions. He arrived in California aboard a clipper and wrote: "The good ship ... was beached at San Francisco and left there where sands blew about her hull and the docks were built beyond her moorings as the city grew.... When thinking of the fate of the *Niantic* it occurs to me she was not such a large vessel after all."

In May 1851 San Francisco burned down for the fifth time. "Fireproof" buildings with thick iron doors and shutters got red hot, warped, and everything behind them was destroyed. In a few hours the entire business section of the city was afire as flames jumped from one wooden wharf-street to the next. In ten hours nearly two thousand buildings were ruined; a few brick ones still stood on Montgomery street; and on Sansome, owners of the Dewitt and Harrison Warehouse used eighty thousand gallons of vinegar in a frantic effort to save it.

Among the victims was *Niantic* which burned to the ground, but that part of her stout hull below ground level was safe. When it cooled the owners timbered it over for the foundation of a building. A few months later the "Niantic House" was offered for rent in the press by James H. Ray, who claimed "the location is very central ... Clay Street having been planked" and suggested it for a large boarding house or hotel. The ad also noted that a "reservoir is being made to contain 5000 gallons of water from the artesian well on the site of the *Niantic* from which each room may be supplied with the best water." So, the vein struck by the ship's old pump log was still bubbling. The house was rented to L. H. Robie who advertised it as a hotel "located upon the site of the old ship *Niantic* in the very heart of the city."

THE NIANTIC HOTEL WAS IN BUSINESS for more than two decades with several owners and a checkered history. One of the guests—before his arrest—was rumored to have buried stolen treasure there. Subsequently, a new owner departed rich and in a hurry. Bret Harte spent a night or two and wrote: "One of these ships transformed into a hotel retained its name 'The Niantic' and part of its characteristic interior unchanged. [He must have visited the basement.] I remember these ships' old tenants—the rats....In the Niantic their pit-a-pat was met on every staircase, and it was said that sometimes in an excess of sociability they accompanied the traveller to his room." The hotel declined as the city expanded west and south and the bad, mad Barbary Coast developed to the north.

Most of the confusion as to whether or not *Niantic* was a

"ship hotel" is due to *High and Dry*, a famous lithograph by the talented and tragic Englishman Frank Marryat in his book *Mountains and Molehills*. Marryat saw her as a storeship on his first San Francisco visit in 1850 and as a hotel on a subsequent trip. Fire destroyed his possessions including "the notes and sketches of the country I had collected to this date which . . . after three years I am rewriting from memory," as he noted in his work written in London in 1854 and subtitled *Recollections of a Burnt Journal*. In Marryat's memory, weakened by time and yellow fever, the storeship and hotel fused into one dramatic impression.

In 1872 the Niantic Hotel was torn down to make way for the Niantic Block. When excavation unearthed *Niantic*'s hulk, the city grew suddenly young. The days of golden possibility bloomed again, and nostalgia was rampant among surviving forty-niners who trooped out daily to watch the work. (The press dubbed them the "Micawber Convention" with a nod to the Dickens character who was always waiting for something to turn up.) One of the "many San Franciscans [who] distinctly remember the time when she was used as a storeship" was Captain C. E. S. McDonald, himself a passenger on *Niantic*'s last voyage. When interviewed by the *Chronicle*, he stated proudly that he and two fellow passengers still thrived in the city. "I am glad to know," he remarked with consummate satisfaction, "that the three of us have lived to see a big thing made out of California."

The old storeship held surprises. Thirty-five baskets of champagne were discovered where they had been stashed more than two decades before by Van Brunt and Verplanck, a firm adjoining *Niantic* on Sansome Street. The wine had been covered so well that it still bubbled and had a "very fair flavor." Though some bottles were drunk on the spot, others were saved as family treasures. One eventually found its way to the Martha's Vineyard home of Captain Cleveland's great-granddaughter, Dionis Coffin Riggs.

San Francisco had no time to linger in the past. She was still growing and building. The new Niantic Block was brick and big, four stories housing various businesses. True to the tradition of storeship and hotel, it made money for owner C. Low until another fire—preceded by The Earthquake—destroyed it in 1906. When the site was once again being prepared—this time for the Niantic Building built by Lorenzo Scatena, one of the first reinforced concrete buildings to go up after the holocaust—there she was again, a gold-rush ghost in a new century. There was more champagne, and when workmen turned up parts of the old ship, they found pieces of oak as sound as when cut from New England hillsides. Captain Cleveland's grandson, visiting in the city, was given one as a souvenir.

In 1919 the Native Daughters of the Golden West placed a bronze plaque on the side of the building, recounting the ship's career "when water came up to Montgomery Street" and putting her firmly in the past tense.

In the spring of 1978 excavation began for a nineteen-story building on the site. Nestled in slippery, clay mud more than twenty feet below street level, *Niantic* awaited her third resurrection. San Franciscans, as always, were delighted to see her. To watch her emerge they cut holes in the surrounding fence; in mute tribute somebody tucked a bunch of daisies into one. Historians were ecstatic and planned to remove her intact; the developers were apprehensive. It was determined that if *Niantic*'s bones should be extracted without prohibitively expensive procedures (because of the instability of the filled land), she would take the adjoining streets and a small grove of nearby redwoods with her in spectacular farewell.

The compromise reached was not without heartache. The developer agreed to remove a cross section of the hull at his own expense for future exhibition at the present National Park Service's National Maritime Museum in San Francisco. The museum staff mounted a "rapid rescue dig" around the daily bulldozing and during three additional days of grace. Among the finds were more champagne (a tradition at *Niantic* unearthings), several presses, ink bottles, the ship's wooden log windlass, a duck's head paper holder, and rolls of an early form of linoleum.

In New York the president of the National Maritime Historical Society mourned "a monument so vital to the story of a city . . . destroyed for the lack of a few dollars," and the director of the Maritime Museum protested the loss of "the only link the nation has with the China trade as well as a link with the event that created San Francisco overnight . . . 'the greatest movement of mankind since the Crusades.' "

It appeared that the old ship had at last been torn out of the heart of the city. For the first time in San Francisco's memory the building at the junction of Clay and Sansome streets would not carry *Niantic* in its name. But after a mere 129 years the gold-rush pioneer was not ready to give up her moorings entirely. Her bow—about thirty feet of it—still rests among the roots of the redwoods of the adjoining mini-park, still points west, and waits. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

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There is a giant sourcebook on buried ships at the National Park Service's National Maritime Museum of San Francisco, now a treasure trove of *Niantic*-ana. San Francisco newspapers provide many references to *Niantic*, beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century.

A clipping from the *Vineyard Gazette* of Edgartown, Massachusetts, in the Neville Scrapbooks at the California Historical Society led to Dionis Coffin Riggs, Captain Cleveland's great granddaughter. During a correspondence spanning a dozen years she generously shared family papers, relocated the *Niantic*'s log within her clan, and steered me to the invaluable "Story of *Niantic* . . . A Bit of Unwritten History," an unpublished manuscript by her uncle Franklin E. Perham, grandson of the good captain.

Joan Parker *is a free-lance writer whose special interest is San Francisco history. Her articles have appeared in magazines ranging from* Westways *to* American Heritage.

Once there were fields to clear, crops to gather, businesses to start.

the words and photographs of a white man. Adams and McCormick, and their wives Alafair and Annie, as well as other older residents of Boley, invariably met my questions about hardship and prejudice with a look of tolerance and an insistence that fate, as well as their fellow man—both black and white—had been good to them.

Alafair Adams recalls: "Nearly everything around here was owned by colored people. Most of it was in farms. Corn and cotton and oats, and everyone with a span of mules and horses. We had chickens and hogs and a beautiful span of mares. Everybody was pretty prosperous here if they tried." Langston McCormick remembers: "The place was all tents and log houses when we came here. I helped haul sand and whatever for nearly every building here." And his wife of over fifty years, Annie Mae McCormick, joined in with a reminder of their self-sufficiency: "We raised meat, lard, peas, potatoes...everything we needed when we was raising our six children."

For most blacks—those with fields to work, livestock to tend, and growing families to raise—the apartheid of Boley with its emphasis on prosperity and limited self-determination seemed an unmitigated boon. For others—those who had really believed in the promise of full participation in the American system—the little island of relative freedom in the Oklahoma sea of prejudice was claustrophobic. For those who recognized the new chains for what they were and for those who failed to prosper in cotton and corn, America became a land without hope. At first, in the fast-paced development of the black-man's city-state, the disillusioned were a small voice. There were fields to clear, houses and barns to build, crops to gather and process, and businesses to start—all by and for black people.

Pushed into this corner of Okfuskee County, without a vote, without full use of public facilities, and without equal protection before the law, blacks—by their very presence—offended a large portion of the white population. And after every traditional American opportunity except ownership of property had been downgraded for Okfuskee blacks, their white neighbors determined to curtail even this opportunity. The farmers in the western end of the county formed organizations called Farmers' Clubs, the purpose of which was to restrict and discourage further black immigration into the county and to encourage the withdrawal of those blacks already living on the land. The club pledge stated the purpose plainly: "For the protection of ourselves and families, and for the upbuilding of a better moral and social citizenship in Oklahoma, we the undersigned citizens and land dealers in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma, do hereby agree, pledge, and obligate ourselves to never rent, lease, or sell any land in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma, to any person or persons of negro blood, or agents of theirs; unless the land be located more than a mile from a white or Indian resident." But such elaborate white conspiracies were not needed to start the decline of the black community of Okfuskee County. The 1913 depression in the cotton market

Time hangs heavy for some recent Boley residents. Federal funds are expected to help the community by rebuilding and restoring old structures.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE MORTON
WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA LIBRARY

did it for them, and it had the additional effect of eliminating white farmers as well.

The sudden economic catastrophe, following constant legal and terrorist pressure from the white community, brought a sense of disillusionment to Okfuskee County. Bittle and Geis comment that suddenly: "'All Men Up—Not Some Down' was not only meaningless but mocking. The appeal of 'On to Boley' had been reduced to a hollow dream.... There would be no Negro autonomy in Oklahoma, no Negro dignity, no Negro peacefulness. There would be no growing respect and admiration from white neighbors and no industrial and agricultural prosperity. Nothing had been changed during the long fight; nothing had been bettered."

Many black Americans were at the extreme of their disillusionment and ready to try anything to escape the darkening angst of their existence. One black man expressed their feelings poignantly: "It is better to die than it is to grow up and find out you're colored ... oh, to be a Negro in a time like this!" The black population at the turn of the century and through the early halcyon days of Boley was not ready to rebel against the stern racial code in the United States. These people did not want to retreat from American values and standards which they had adopted as their own. Boley and the smaller black towns like it were not an attempt to reject America and adopt Africanism, but rather an attempt to prove that blacks could make it in the white world on white terms, living the ideals of white culture. It was a dream also shared by a handful of whites like Lake Moore and W. H. Boley himself, but it was a dream that ultimately drew the hatred of white neighbors. Maybe what they feared most about Boley was its success, its proof that black people could succeed when given only half a chance. That was too much for the average white Oklahoman to accept, even in an isolated black community.

On this dismal scene in 1914 entered Chief Alfred Charles Sam with his Back-to-Africa movement. Eager to escape a dead end in America, many blacks embraced the dream of returning to Africa. The advent of Chief Sam, who described himself as one of the chiefs of the Tribes of Akim on the Gold Coast in western Africa, seems to have been invited by the desperation of the situation, and Sam promoted his Back-to-Africa movement by recruiting disillusioned people from the rural areas of the Southwest, especially Oklahoma. He went from community to community encouraging people to sell their land and possessions and purchase stock in his Akim Trading Company. One twenty-five-dollar share of the stock (embellished with the globe, a ship, and an industrial site as symbols of the new life in Africa) entitled the holder to a one-way ticket to Africa on a ship Sam eventually purchased with the funds raised.

The idea was to make numerous Atlantic crossings with the ship, carrying black American emigrants to Africa and returning to America with African cargo. In time Sam hoped to transport all black Americans who wished to leave their homeland to the west coast of Africa. He attracted thousands of enthusiastic followers and investors to his plan, but he also drew just as vigorous opposition from the segment of the black community that viewed his dreams with suspicion and feared his ability to deplete the black towns that had been so carefully nurtured in Oklahoma. Their fears were justified. Boley and Okfuskee County bore the brunt of Sam's Back-to-Africa campaign, and some observers of Boley history designate Sam's success there as the major turning point in the town's decline. Newspapers of the time—black as well as white—were almost unanimously against Sam's movement.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE NO PEOPLE in Boley today who made the trip to Africa with Chief Sam, there are many who remember the man and his impact on the town. Ninety-eight-year-old Maggie-Marie MacMullen, who came to Oklahoma from Texas in 1905, told me: "Chief Sam almost broke Boley up. He had a lot of influence on a lot of people. He broke up families, and some people left and never came back." Alafair Adams joined Mrs. MacMullen in her criticism: "So many people lost out. The native people were especially broke up. He really tore up the county among the colored people. You take all the little towns and communities...he traveled all over this part of the country. Those native folks—a lot of them—got rid of their land, and their children's allotted land who were old enough to file. They were looking to someplace where there was no opposition. Chief Sam was just a good con man." Exodus Adams told us that although he "didn't affiliate with that movement," some of his people were in it. "One of my uncles kind of followed him," he said, "and there was a lot of suffering."

The articulate Velma Dolphin Ashley, former superintendent of the Boley school system, characterized the Back-to-Africa movement as "a grand mess which is hard to document." "There are no real records of that time," said Mrs. Ashley, who wrote a master's thesis on the history of Boley in 1940, "but apparently Sam promised all sorts of things for his followers in Africa. He promised farms for the families, with easy prosperity. He promised the women that they would be princesses and queens. According to some reports he claimed food could be picked from trees and diamonds found on the ground. I couldn't call him a complete charlatan because I can't find anything to read on him, but let me say that what he was doing wasn't for the good of the community and what happened to the people in Africa wasn't what he promised."

Eventually Sam's movement failed completely, but not before hundreds of people had sold their land to follow Sam to Africa, and not before a shipload of families had been transported to the Gold Coast to learn for themselves that Sam's dream was just that, never to be anything more. Mrs. Ashley said people would not listen to reason when an attempt was made to prove Sam's movement a hoax. She charged Sam with taking "a fair third of Boley's population and wealth."

The decline that began in Boley with the cotton crash of 1913 was intensified by the departure of people and funds devoted to Chief Sam and his dream in the succeeding year. Soon there followed what Alafair Adams referred to as the "dry years" and the great depression with its accompanying migration out of all parts of Oklahoma. This time cotton prices fell from forty cents to two cents a pound, and, symbolically, the Fort Smith and Western Railroad, whose officials and pres-

Boley is like one big family, and I wouldn't live anywhere else but here.

ence had played such a key role in the founding and growth of Boley, pulled out in 1938.

Today there are no cotton gins in Boley, and if Exodus Adams still raised cotton, he would probably have to go at least as far to find a gin as his family did when they loaded up the wagons and made the trek to Shawnee. From Bernice's Barbeque at the south end of town, where one can still sit down to a fine country meal, to the telephone exchange at the other end of Main Street, more buildings are empty and decaying than are used for business. The post office is housed on the bottom floor of what used to be the town's proudest building, the three-story Masonic Temple which burned years ago. Across the street from the post office is the empty Farmers State Bank. Under a different name in 1932 the bank was the scene of a shootout which pitted Joseph Langston McCormick and other townspeople against associates of "Pretty Boy" Floyd. McCormick and the townspeople won. Among Boley's best hopes for the future is the restoration of these old buildings which have been declared of historical value; federal funds have been allocated for their reconstruction.

Still, the Boley telephone book—from Exodus Adams to Sarah L. Young—is only three pages: a record of the dreams of many, shrunk to the existence of a few.

ON A QUIET SATURDAY morning last fall, Boley Mayor Sam Wilcots, his friend Freedie Kees, and cafe owner T. R. McCormick sat and sipped their coffee and talked about the future of the town and why they had stayed on. "The main thing around here," said Freedie Kees, "is that we feel for each other. We come to each other's rescue. Boley is like one big family, and I wouldn't live anywhere else but here. Where I came from in Louisiana in 1946 there was like a chalk line there and you couldn't veer one way or another on either side without getting into trouble. My brother and I wanted a place where we could relax and be free. And Boley is it, always was and always will be for our people."

Mayor Wilcots, who, along with Freedie Kees was commuting sixty miles to work every day at Tinker Air Force Base, believed that the Boley population was on the increase, and he thought that the 1970 census that put the population of Boley at 516 was erroneous. "There are at least 600 people here in Boley," he contended. "Retired people are coming back. They owned property here, never sold when they moved away, and they're moving back. Also, sometimes the children of these people discover the family owns twenty acres back in Okfuskee County, and they want to come back." Exodus Adams had a less sanguine opinion on the future of the town. "I often think about the future of Boley," he said. "It looks kind of gloomy. The young people aren't like they was when I was coming up. It seems that they're good-timers. There are a few moving back, but the land has been sold, and what hasn't been sold isn't for sale. I bought mine for ten dollars an acre, and now I wouldn't take two hundred an acre for it."

Mrs. Ashley said that "the future of Boley depends a lot on what the government does." There was a disproportionate number of people in Boley on government aid of one form or another, and in the opinion of most residents some kind of government stimulation is needed to attract industry to the town, get people off welfare, stop the outward migration, and bring back home those workers who commute. Mrs. Ashley said that she "was surprised, though, at the number of high school students of parents who had returned to Boley for whatever reason." She credited the move home to the fact that "the people would like to live here to be able to move to the top of whatever they do, even though it's not very much." Looking

Continued on page 63

Coming in THE AMERICAN WEST:

A History of Cowboy Boots
Tepee Living
The Legend of Joaquin Murieta
Oscar Wilde Goes West
Lillie Langtry in the West

THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

The Ranchers: A Book For Generations

by Ray Allen Billington

The Ranchers: A Book for Generations *by Stan Steiner (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1980; 185 pp., illus., $12.95).*

THIS IS A DECEPTIVE book. To the casual reader it offers a rich variety of rib-tickling anecdotes and nostalgic reminiscences of the frontier past. To those who seek a deeper meaning the volume tells a tragic tale: a moving narrative of the struggle of small ranchers to preserve a way of life that they know, in their deepest hearts, to be already doomed.

Stan Steiner spent thirty years and traveled thousands of miles—from eastern Oregon to the ghost town of Shakespear on the Texas-Mexican border—listening to small ranchers as they talked of their experiences, past and present. To all he asked one question: "Why and how did you survive, and what, if anything, do you think the country can learn from the way you have survived?" Then he listened. "One doesn't interview ranchers, one visits with them." And listen he did. "It beats workin'," one told him after hours of yarn spinning.

Some who talked were descendants of homesteaders from generations back, others had homesteaded themselves, fleeing the dust bowl of the 1930s. Most had responded to the urge for westering that sent generations of pioneers toward the setting sun. "Pa used to like to say that he just hitched up the wagons one morning, rounded up the livestock, whistled for the dogs, hollered for the young 'uns, and struck out to look for some mountains." They shared two things in common: all were poor and "few, if any, of them knew a damn thing about longhorn cattle."

So they had to "make do." This meant a liberal use of frontier ingenuity: canning jars fashioned from old bottles, making lye soap, cooling meat without refrigeration, creating a planter by drilling holes in a tin dishpan, brewing homemade medicines (when you took a double spoonful of your own Syrup of Figs "you just camped out by the outhouse"). In those days, too, you had to work together, not because you wanted to, but because you had to: building the community schoolhouse, helping out at calfing or roundup time, joining in fighting fires. "It's a good feeling to be neighborly," one remembered.

That isolation began to erode when good roads linked country and city, for those roads not only brought the countryside into the city, but the city into the countryside. "Our way of life," one rancher told Steiner, "has gone down that road." The local school succumbed to the yellow bus and the consolidated school, "making do" to the supermarket in a nearby town, the horse to the pickup and "Tokyo quarter horses," living alone to living together. "That is our problem on the ranches," Steiner heard. "Rural problems have become urban problems."

So they did, for the needs of sprawling cities transcended those of rural America. Real estate developers appeared to build housing or vacation resorts demanded by "urban refugees." "The more people you have in ranch country, the less ranches you have." Strip miners—"locusts" the ranchers called them—lurked in the background, ready to pounce at the first sign of weakness. They were the ultimate despoilers of the earth: "they have to dig up and use the principal, which is the coal, which is the oil, which is not the grass, which is not the animals." These were the "interest" and would pay forever if the ranchers had their way.

And always there was the Bureau of Land Management, ready to enforce laws passed by city-bred legislators at the insistence of sob-sister environmentalists: laws to prohibit fences that interfered with elk migrations, laws that decreed that barbed wire fences should be at least sixteen inches above the ground—"just high enough," as one rancher said, to allow "coyotes to go from one pasture to another without stooping," laws that doomed all profits for the rancher. "It's those other people, the government people, who are forcing us ranchers out of business."

These were the plaints that Stan Steiner heard, and they add tragedy to this moving book. There is no hint of surrender or retreat on the part of the ranchers; fighting the strip miners or the BLM agents is as much a part of ranch life in the 1980s as fighting blizzards was in the 1880s. But their combined testimony serves as both a celebration and requiem for a manner of life that has been outmoded by "progress." "We are going to be the last generation of western men if we lose," one old-timer told him. "There's no place to pioneer any more. Nowhere to hide. When we die, America dies."

This, then, is a significant book. Stan Steiner is no crusader; he lets the ranchers speak for themselves. But the message is there, and those who love the West or believe that our frontier heritage must not be forgotten, can do no better than read the story that he tells so brilliantly. This is a fun book to read, but it is also a serious book to ponder. **AW**

Ray Allen Billington is Senior Research Associate at The Huntington Library. He is the author of many works on American frontier history.

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WESTERN BOOKS IN BRIEF

Indian Rock Art of the Southwest *by Polly Schaafsma (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1980; 379 pp., illus., biblio., index, $40).*

In this impressive volume, veteran author Schaafsma describes and traces rock art styles of the southwest Indians for three thousand years. Almost three hundred photographs, both in color and black and white, enhance this cultural interpretation of pre-historic peoples.

Panhandle Cowboy *by John R. Erickson (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1980; 213 pp., illus., $12.50).*

Here is an engaging account of the day-to-day experiences of a contemporary working cowboy and ranch manager in the Oklahoma Panhandle.

The Bright Edge: A Guide to the National Parks of the Colorado Plateau *by Stephen Trimble (Museum of Northern Arizona Press, Flagstaff, 1979; 74 pp., illus., $4.95 paper).*

Striking color photographs in this handsomely produced volume lead the reader into the beauty of the canyons and deserts of those areas of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona known as the Colorado Plateau. The text is descriptive and helpful. Especially interesting is the portrayal of ancient dwellings left by early cultures, as well as the short description of the Indian peoples who inhabit the Plateau.

North to Montana! Jehus, Bullwhackers, and Mule Skinners on the Montana Trail *by Betty M. Madsen and Brigham D. Madsen (University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 1980; 298 pp., illus., maps, biblio., appen., index, $20).*

Excitement and adventure accompany a variety of pioneers in this anecdotal story of travel along the Montana Trail, from Utah to western Montana in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Literary San Franicsco: A Pictorial History from Its Beginnings to the Present Day *by Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Nancy J. Peters (City Lights Books and Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1980; 254 pp., illus., biblio., index, $15.95).*

This over-size, profusely illustrated volume is a must for all who are interested in the literati of San Franisco from early days to the present. In a popular, anecdotal style, the great and near-great are brought to life and their contributions noted with pungent insight.

Man Meets Grizzly: Encounters in the Wild from Lewis and Clark to Modern Times *gathered by F. M. Young, edited by Coralie Beyers (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1980; 298 pp., $10.95).*

This is a fascinating collection of encounters with the grizzly by all kinds of pioneers in the American West. It attests to the animal's cunning and strength as well as to man's courage and quick thinking while he pursued an unreasoned practice of extermination.

Thomas Moran: Watercolors of the American West. *Text and catalogue raisonné by Carol Clark (for The Amon Carter Museum of Western Art by the University of Texas Press, Austin, 1980; 180 pp., illus., biblio., index, $25).*

This handsome, large volume presents Moran's magnificent watercolors (some in color), reflecting a sense of discovery and awe of the stunning western scenery he depicted.

Tatoosh *by Martha Hardy (The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1980; 239 pp., illus., paper $6.95).*

Hardy entertains with a lively and human account of her stint as a fire lookout for the U.S. Forest Service in the 1940s on Tatoosh Peak in Washington state. Her reactions to loneliness, responsibility, nature, animals, human companionship—all add up to personal growth.

Island Sojourn *by Elizabeth Arthur (Harper & Row, New York, 1980; 220 pp., map, $9.95).*

In the mid-seventies a young couple rejected

modern materialism by escaping to the wilderness of British Columbia. The wife recounts with perception and frankness their trials, their joys, and their final decision that they could not embrace the wilds permanently.

Mt. St. Helens: The Volcano Explodes! *by Leonard Palmer and KOIN-TV Newsroom 6 (Northwest Illustrated, Portland, Oregon, 1980; 119 pp., illus., map, soft $7.95, hard $15.00).*
With 202 photographs (over half in color), this timely, over-size book tells the dramatic story of Mt. St. Helens. Written for a popular audience, the work restricts scientific data to a minimum, concentrating on what happened to the surrounding countryside, offering breathtaking pictures of the mountain in eruption.

Lakota Belief and Ritual *by James R. Walker, ed. by Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1980; 329 pp., illus., notes, biblio., appen., index, $21.50).*
While Walker was the agency physician on the Pine Ridge Reservation between 1896 and 1914, he wrote down interviews with Indian leaders who explained the concepts on which Lakota religion and rituals are based. This important book presents primary material which is a must for everyone interested in Lakota beliefs.

Three Caravans to Yuma: The Untold Story of Bactrian Camels in Western America *by Harlan D. Fowler (Arthur H. Clark Co., Glendale, California, 1980; 173 pp., illus., maps, biblio., appen., index, $25).*
After some years of painstaking search, the author feels that this account tells all that can be found about the use of camels as beasts of burden in the American West, including British Columbia. This is an intriguing tale, accompanied by old photographs and paintings.

Room and Time Enough: The Land of Mary Austin *by Augusta Fink, photographs by Morley Baer (Northland Press, Flagstaff, 1979; 75 pp., illus., $20.00).*
With obvious affection for poet Mary Austin, the author and photographer have created a striking and beautiful tribute to her and the western lands that she loved. A short, perceptive biography of Austin is followed by the poet's own descriptions of the lands which the photographs embrace.

The First Hundred Years of Painting in California 1775–1875 *by Jeanne Van Nostrand (John Howell–Books, San Francisco, 1980; 135 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $75.00).*
The story of painting in California is also the story of the golden state. This magnificent, over-sized volume presents beautiful reproductions of paintings depicting all manner of scenery and activity spanning a century. Biographical information regarding the artists provides a history of artistic development on the west coast, hitherto untold.

Traces *by Rick Steber, Don Gray, and Jerry Gildemeister (The Bear Wallow Pub. Co., Union, Oregon, 1980; 212 pp., illus., notes, $38.00).*
This is the story of the last, living pioneers of the Oregon Trail. A handsome, over-size volume, with 120 original photos and illustrations, *Traces* relates the firsthand memories of elderly westerners who traveled the Oregon Trail by wagon during the years from 1886 to 1906.

Early Churches of Washington State *by Arnold Pearson and Esther Pearson (University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1980; 182 pp., illus., map, biblio., index, $22.50).*
Picturesque, plain, New England, foreign, classical—a profusion of churches built in Washington state from about 1856 to the early twentieth century are handsomely presented in this volume. **AW**

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WESTERN BOOK REVIEWS

Hard-Rock Miners: The Intermountain West, 1860–1920, *by Ronald C. Brown (Texas A&M University, College Station, 1979; 216 pp., illus., biblio., appen., index, $15.95).*

Reviewed by Joseph R. Conlin

TO WRITE of "the" hard rock miner is like talking about Mr. and Mrs. America. The men who dug gold and silver from the western mountains were as varied as the kinds of rock into which they sank their drills. In racial background, age, education, and character, they reflected wide divergence. They coped with subterranean climates as different as the Arizona August and the Montana January. The miners' "hometown" might be a bonanza site which changed its face as often as the miners changed shifts, a mature modern city where they rode to work on a streetcar, or a dying pre-ghost town where the bank was boarded up, the schoolhouse falling down, and the hangers-on surviving on dreams of forgotten ore. The levels of technology differed so much from camp to camp that in any other industry they might have represented different centuries.

Such diversity is the message of Ronald C. Brown's detailed portrait of the hard rock miners. Brown describes the nature and condition of the miners' work, their diversions, avocations, fears, and ailments, and the ways in which they looked at the world and their place in it. His material closely parallels that in Mark Wyman's *Hard Rock Epic*, published just a few months ago. *Hard-Rock Miners* is analytically less unified than Wyman's book. Comprehensive description is its virtue and the diversity of mining life its most striking theme.

Of course, there were circumstances in which every miner shared, and Brown does not neglect them. The work was always dangerous and promised no long-term security; it was generally well paid and performed mostly in an industrial, urban environment—in isolated inland cities, to be sure—but in a modern setting nonetheless.

This is a useful addition to the now significant body of historical literature on western mining. It is detailed and informative. I wish I could add that it was also enjoyable to read, bringing that peculiar group of men to life. But it is scholarly in style as well as method; its prose is plodding and overwrought. However, now that Brown, Wyman, Richard Lingenfelter (*The Hard Rock Miners*, 1974), Duane Smith (*Rocky Mountain Mining Camps*, 1967), and others have assembled such a solid body of scholarship, it will be possible for someone to do for the men who extracted the metals what T. H. Watkins's *Gold and Silver in the West* did for western mining history in general. **AW**

Joseph R. Conlin is a professor of history at California State University at Chico. He has written a number of works about labor relations in western hard-rock mining.

Isaac I. Stevens: Young Man in a Hurry *by Kent D. Richards (Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1979; 498 pp., illus., maps, notes, index, $15.95).*

Reviewed by George H. Tweney

THIS YOUNG MAN IN A HURRY was descended from settlers who came to Massachusetts in the middle of the seventeenth century. Exhibiting New England energy and commitment, Isaac Ingalls Stevens (1818–1862) pursued a career in public service after graduating first in his class at the United States Military Academy. Piling accomplishment upon accomplishment, Stevens was next an officer in the Army Corps of Engineers, Coast Survey officer, governor of Washington Territory, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, head of a Pacific railroad survey, delegate to Congress, and a Civil War general. In these varied capacities he participated in a broad spectrum of scientific, military, and political activities spanning the era from the age of Jackson to the middle of the Civil War.

Beginning in 1853, Stevens spent most of his time and energy as governor of Washington Territory and as director of exploration for the northern route of the Pacific railroad survey. When funds for completing the survey were witheld, Stevens used his meager resources as governor to bring the work gradually to completion. His post as governor ultimately proved to be a nightmare, the result for the most part of his efforts to make a number of treaties with the Indians. This led eventually to the arrest of Stevens himself for contempt of court. Subsequently, however, he was elected to a double term as a territorial delegate to Congress. While he was gallantly leading a charge at Chantilly during the Civil War, a bullet in the temple terminated his career.

Young Man in a Hurry is the definitive biography of this leader in the pioneer West. There have been several other biographies of Stevens, most notably a two-volume one written by his son Hazard in 1900. As the author says, this earlier biography "virtually elevated his father to sainthood." Isaac Stevens acquired many fast friends, but he also engaged in monumental feuds. Most writers about his career have tended to be extremely critical or extremely complimentary. Doctor Richards has done his best to present an unbiased view of his subject. It is unlikely that another biography will be necessary unless new data come to light.

The text is well documented, with copious notes and a discussion of various sources. The university press, however, could have done a better job of editing and of reproducing illustrations. Taken as a whole, this is a scholarly, accurate, historical work. **AW**

George H. Tweney is a lecturer at Highline College in Midway, Washington, a consulting engineer, and a collector of western Americana.

The Road West: Saga of the 35th Parallel *by Bertha S. Dodge (University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1980; 230 pp., map, biblio., appen., index, $15.95).*

Reviewed by David E. Schob

UNLIKE OTHER transcontinental routes, the story of the 35th parallel has roots which tap deep into the history of the Southwest. The 35th parallel, running through western New Mexico, was influenced by the rise of a mesa bearing the name of El Morro. Its prominence was probably sighted by the Spanish in 1540 when Coronado's men passed through the region in pursuit of the fabled cities of Cíbola. The fresh water pool at the base of El Morro attracted explorers, and from the mesa's crest an imaginary line could be drawn west to the

Pacific. Over the centuries Spanish names were carved into the sides of El Morro to be joined by those of Americans who streamed out to the Southwest in the nineteenth century.

Bertha Dodge, an accomplished writer, draws heavily from contemporary letters, diaries, and official reports in chronicling American efforts in the 1840s and 1850s to make that region part of a viable route for westward-bound settlers. In 1857 imported camels were introduced for its exploration. But the "great camel experiment," hardly given a fair trial, was abandoned with the outbreak of the Civil War.

Dodge's treatment of the problems faced by the emigrants who trekked with their wagons through the inhospitable region is a standard account but nonetheless written in an exciting manner. This monograph is solidly researched and competently organized, replete with a map and photographs. Occasionally Dodge waxes romantic and indulges in wishful "what if" speculations; however, this work is a genuine contribution to the literature which deserves inclusion in libraries and holdings specializing in the history of the Southwest. **AW**

David E. Schob is an associate professor of American history at Texax A&M University and author of Hired Hands and Plowboys: Farm Labor in the Midwest, 1815–60.

Sacagawea of the Lewis and Clark Expedition *by Ella E. Clark and Margot Edmonds (University of California, Berkeley, 1980; 179 pp., map, biblio., appen., index, $10.95).*

Reviewed by Arlen J. Large

ANY BOOK promising to portray Sacagawea "in the light of accurate history rather than legend" is certain to be received expectantly by students of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The saga of the young Shoshoni woman who accompanied the exploring party to the Pacific Ocean in 1805–1806 has been most shamefully puffed up in twentieth-century books and articles, and it is rare to see her remarkable story told straight.

This has been attempted by Ella E. Clark, professor emeritus of English at Washington State University, with the help of writer Margot Edmonds. They succeed partly, but in the end the reader may be left confused and even a little angry.

The book starts with a condensed account of the expedition itself. Using the Lewis and Clark journals, the authors correctly describe Sacagawea's role as interpreter, food finder, and symbol of peace for Indians alarmed by the gun-toting explorers. On a couple of occasions, in a limited area of her mountain homeland, she gave advice on which pass to cross.

The authors make their greatest contribution in tracing how later writers falsely ennobled the Indian woman as a "guide" along the

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whole route. They document how Sacagawea became a handy heroine for women's suffrage propagandists of the early 1900s. And the authors nail a faked quote attributed to the journals by Grace Raymond Hebard in a 1907 article praising Sacagawea for "guiding us unerringly."

How odd, then, that the authors accept as "accurate history" the Hebard theory that Sacagawea lived to a great age after the expedition. The book's final chapters are a disorganized data dump of third-hand claims that the heroine wandered all over the West before her death in Wyoming in 1884. The authors do mention conflicting evidence that Sacagawea died in South Dakota just six years after the expedition ended. But for no very good reason they ask the reader to disregard these contemporary accounts, claiming a mixup of identification which incredibly fooled even Captain Clark himself. Thus, while the expedition chapters of the book give an accurate history of Sacagawea's contribution, the ending is a rehash of unconvincing legend. **AW**

Arlen J. Large is a Washington correspondent for the Wall Street Journal *and a director of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.*

The Blind Boss and His City: Christopher Augustine Buckley and Nineteenth-Century San Francisco *by William A. Bullough (University of California, Berkeley, 1979; 346 pp., illus., biblio., notes, index, $19.95).*

Reviewed by Richard Reinhardt

CHRISTOPHER AUGUSTINE BUCKLEY, an Irish-American saloon keeper who walked around town clutching the elbow of a seeing-eye bodyguard and making a show of recognizing hundreds of friends and enemies merely by their voices, was effectively the mayor of San Francisco for close to a decade in the '80s and '90s of the last century. You will not find his sightless face in the portrait gallery of civic leaders in the corridor of the present mayor's office or his name in the city archives. But there is ample testimony that he lived and reigned. To break the influence of Buckley and others like him, the Goo-Goos—the "Good Government" reformers of the 1890s—rewrote the city charters and state election codes throughout the United States, transferring the powers of the saloon boss to public officials who were more responsive to—well, more responsive to the Goo-Goos.

That much we know before opening this meticulously detailed study of Chris Buckley and the municipality around him. It is disappointing, in view of Professor Bullough's painstaking research, that after 346 pages we do not know a great deal more than we did at the beginning. To what purpose and in whose interest did Buckley capture and enslave the local Democratic party organization? To what extent was Buckley to blame for the notorious moral degredation of San Francisco's Barbary Coast? How important was Buckley in the real or imagined control of state government by the Southern Pacific Railroad? Was Buckley responsible for the civic corruption so vividly illustrated by the collapse of San Francisco's newly completed city hall in the first seconds of the 1906 earthquake? Or was Buckley, after all, no more than a product of his times, a public symbol of the inchoate power of an emerging urban working class?

Part of the problem lies in the nature of the subject, political power, an elusive nonsubstance that exists only by virtue of somebody's believing in it, and that manifests itself, like light, only by its impact on something else. Part of it lies in the raw material—forgotten issues and events, evanescent political conversations, obscure maneuvers, rhetoric, assumptions, speculation. And part of it, unfortunately, lies in Bullough's method, his piling up of documentation to support the essentially feeble thesis that if Boss Buckley had not existed, it would have been necessary for San Francisco to create him.

The author maintains that Buckley "provided the city...with precisely what it required, a focus of authority to reduce the confusion resulting from archaic political systems." This sounds suspiciously like a civil service job description: "Classification UB-19, Urban Boss, Late Nineteenth Century." One cannot imagine Lincoln Steffens, Samuel Orth, or Matthew Josephson characterizing a city boss in such creamy words. Imagine—the nefarious "Blind White Devil," the "Shame of San Francisco," the nemesis of the muckrakers reduced to a mere sociological phenomenon, an interchangeable part in a process called "urbanization."

Of course, all those opinionated muckrakers were writing from the perspective of would-be reformers. They knew, or thought they knew, who the villains were. Nowadays, revision and relativity are the style in urban historiography, and the very concept of municipal villainy has disappeared.

In an autobiography published in 1945, the late New York congressman Sol Bloom, who had served at age fifteen as Chris Buckley's street guide and bag man, succinctly stated the public case against the Blind Boss: "Now and then, Buckley would dispatch me with a message to someone at the Southern Pacific offices, on whose 'payroll' he was for years."

Bullough, like Congressman Bloom, occasionally throws away the elaborate mechanisms of academic historiography to advance an opinion supported primarily by intuition. At such moments, his book takes on the pungency the subject deserves. Odd that a work of historical scholarship should be most convincing when it succumbs to the passions and prejudices of the past—the mythic, imprecise past that it is earnestly trying to rewrite. **AW**

Richard Reinhardt is co-author with the late Paul C. Johnson of the recently published pictorial history San Francisco As It Is, As It Was.

Exile in the Wilderness: The Life of Chief Factor Archibald McDonald, 1790–1853 *by Jean Murray Cole (University of Washington, Seattle, 1980; 288 pp., illus., biblio., appen., notes, index, $15.95).*

Reviewed by Burton Smith

Exile in the Wilderness is a highly readable and entertaining book which should be of wide interest to the general reading public. The author, a great-great-granddaughter of Archibald McDonald, has traced the involvement of her ancestor from the earliest attempts to establish the ill-fated Red River colony of Lord Selkirk's, through the tense and sometimes violent competition between the Hudson's Bay and North West companies, their eventual merger, and the final race for control of trade in the Pacific Northwest.

The book offers little that is new to the already extensive literature of the fur trade for the serious student of history. McDonald was not dissimilar from countless other Scotsmen who traveled on the North American continent, representing the fur companies and in the process, seeking their own fortune and future. Nor did he differ significantly from his countrymen in displaying those characteristics that have in fact and fiction become associated with the Scots.

Despite this, the book is worth reading. If it has a shortcoming, it is the author's failure to develop Archibald McDonald fully. In an effort to let the subject tell "his own story," the author has linked together in strict chronological fashion a series of events. Little attempt is made at interpreting the importance of McDonald in the events of his day, and because of this, the work lacks insight. If the aim of a biography is to reconstruct a life, then this must be ranked as a near miss. **AW**

Burton Smith is a professor of history at the University of Alberta. His most recent publications have been about Indian land allotments.

directly at me, Mrs. Ashley said: "I want to emphasize one point if I don't get another one across—this is mine, this town. If it grows I'll have to make it grow, but I'm not going to let you—outsiders—kill it." Looking a bit abashed at her own vehemence, her expression softened as she hurriedly added, "Of course I don't mean 'you' specifically."

On my last day in Boley, Police Chief Joe McCormick, son of the famous Deputy Sheriff Joseph Langston McCormick, was anxious to take me to the outskirts of town where a new community had been started. We bounced through an old farm gate and down a rutted road in the Boley police cruiser until we suddenly emerged on a high sandstone ridge overlooking some beautiful Okfuskee bottom land. Here and there scattered over the edge of the ridge were house trailers and a variety of small farm sheds. At the side of almost every trailer were sturdy-looking women vigorously washing laundry by hand. Girls attired in fresh long dresses and high white socks and boys clothed like little men chased one another around the buildings and trailers in a spirited game of tag. As we got out of the car a strong-looking man with a Dutch face approached us. When he saw Joe his expression turned from one of curiousity at the approach of strangers to one of pleasure. Joe McCormick introduced me to George Pleitt, head of this small band of Canadian Mennonite farmers who fled Mexico after harassment by other communities there and the threat of expropriation of their land by the Mexican government.

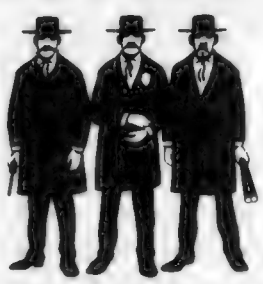
Because there is a question of legality of these Mennonites' remaining in the United States under this nation's immigrant quota system, the permanence of their settlement in Okfuskee County is in doubt. The people of Boley, especially Police Chief Joseph Langston McCormick, Jr., think these people need a home and want to share their little corner of Okfuskee County with them. In just a few hours Joe McCormick was able to fill several petition sheets with signatures of Boley citizens who wanted the Mennonites to have a home there. George Pleitt told us of the wanderings of his people from Germany to Russia to Canada to Mexico and finally to Okfuskee County, Oklahoma. Each time they built farms, worked the land, and sought to live according to their beliefs, and each time, for generations, they had to move on, often abandoning all they had built. This time they would like to stay. He told us, "Okfuskee County is the right place for our people, and the people of Boley have made us feel welcome."

As we prepared to leave, George Pleitt turned to Joe and said, "I only hope that some day we may be able to do unto you as you have done unto us." Here were two men who understood the meaning of the word "home."

Boley was alive. **AW**

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

Much of the material for this article was gained by oral interviews. For background, the following were useful: William E. Bittle and Gilbert Geis, *The Longest Way Home* (1964); Washington Irving, *A Tour on the Prairies* (1967); Angie Debo, *Oklahoma: Foot-Loose and Fancy-Free* (1949); Velma Dolphin Ashley, "A History of Boley, Oklahoma," master's thesis at Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas (1940).



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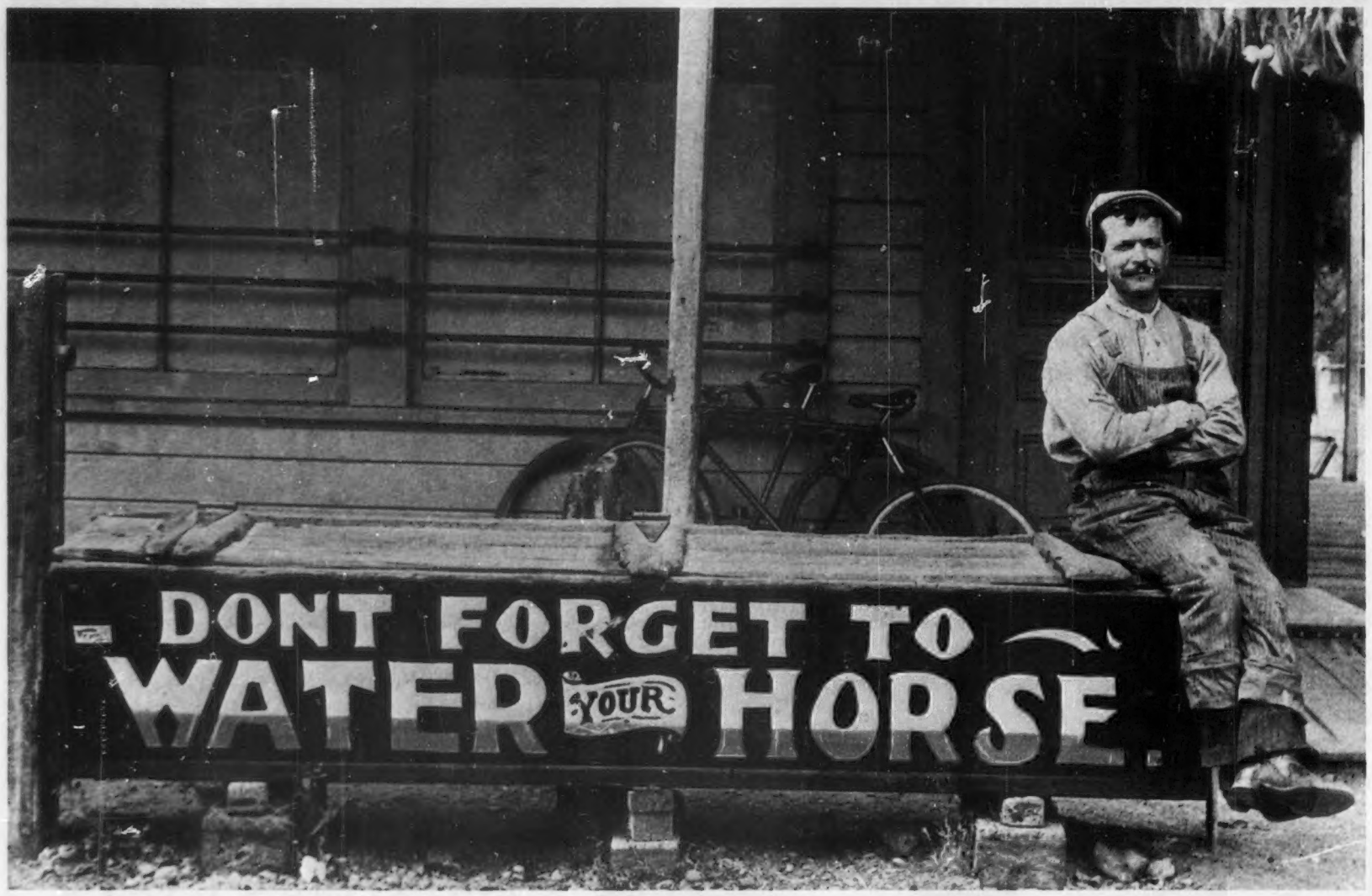

A RIDER PULLING UP TO Torre's Saloon in the early 1900s was not likely to wet his whistle without first watering his mount. In front of the saloon, painted on the side of a wooden trough, was a wry reminder that his horse might be thirsty too. Taken about 1906, this photograph reveals an amusing part of the past in Brentwood—then a small town of dusty streets in the San Joaquin Valley, about sixty miles east of San Francisco. Staring at us through the years is the Brentwood barkeep himself, Jim Torre, sitting with folded arms on what may well have been his handiwork.

Charles A. Bohakel of Antioch, California, sent us this snapshot discovered during his research for courses he teaches in California history. A saloon still stands at the corner of First and Oak Streets, he tells us, although its name has been changed from Torre's to the Diablo Club, and the town has grown from a few hundred residents to about three thousand. As for the trough and its playful message, they have disappeared with the horses which were once watered there. Jim Torre is gone too—inexplicably murdered inside his saloon in 1916. He died a man in his thirties with a bullet in his chest.

All is quiet, however, in the scene of this western shapshot. We smile at the sign on the trough, unaware of violence awaiting the mustachioed man at rest.

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